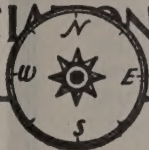


5 W

# The COMPASS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS



June-July, 1941

*Special Letter from the Executive Committee*

*Reports from Officers to the Delegate  
Conference*

*Reports on Delegate Conference Actions*

*Commentaries on the St. Louis Report*

Volume XXII

Numbers 9 and 10



THIS issue of THE COMPASS, supplemented by the August number, will embrace the materials making up the annual report of the Association. The picture of the Association's work during the year will be completed in the August issue by reports which were either directly presented to the Conference or submitted in the delegates' folders: these reports come from the national Committee on Government and Social Work, the national Committee on Personnel Practices, the Committee on Chapters and the National Membership Committee.

It will be noted that this issue contains reports on actions taken by the National Board and by the Executive Committee at meetings held soon after the Conference.

The "Tentative Criteria of Professional Conduct" which was preprinted for delegates and scheduled for this issue will appear instead in the August number.

THOMAS H. HOARE, assistant executive secretary of the Association from 1936 to 1938, made a valuable gift to the AASW when he handled the publicity for the Delegate Conference on a voluntary basis. Mr. Hoare contributed his services from May 27 to May 31, supplying the press of Philadelphia and the news services used by other papers with information about the program and activities of the Association.

Of principal interest to the newspaper editors was information from the trends study undertaken by the Committee on Government and Social Work in cooperation with chapters, and reported at the conference by Donald H. Howard.

The importance of governmental welfare programs as essential to national defense — a thesis which has been the focus of the Association's work during the year — and the AASW platform were also emphasized by Mr. Hoare in statements used by the newspapers.

Mr. Hoare is now Director of Social Relations, Massachusetts Association of Personal Finance Companies, Boston.

Some of the ballots for the 1941-42 election were late in getting into the mails. The final date for return mailing of ballots has been postponed from July 21st, as noted on the ballot, to July 29th. Any ballots postmarked on or before July 29th will be counted.

## Contents

Article	Page
Special Letter from the Executive Committee of the National Board.....	3
Executive Committee in Session.....	5
Open Meetings of the AASW during NCSW .....	6
Report of the President.....	7
Report of the Executive Secretary.....	13
National Roster .....	18
Report of the Treasurer.....	19
By-law Changes .....	23
Association Finances .....	23
Conference Resolutions .....	24
Special Committee on Delegate Conference .....	25
The "Goodwill Hour" .....	25
Values of St. Louis Inquiry and Report for Future Study .....	26
Participation of Staff in Conference Sessions as Representatives of AASW..	28
Material for the 1941 Delegate Conference .....	28
Comments on the St. Louis Report.....	29
Chapter and National Procedures for Employment Practices Inquiries .....	34

## THE COMPASS

Published monthly except September by  
 AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS  
 Publication office 374 Broadway, Albany, N. Y.  
 Editorial and General office 130 East 22nd St.,  
 New York, N. Y.

VOLUME XXII

NUMBERS 9 and 10

### Officers

Wayne McMillen, *Pres.* Kenneth L. M. Pray, *3rd V-Pres.*  
 Pierce Atwater, *1st V-Pres.* James Brunot, *Treas.*  
 Frank J. Bruno, *2nd V-Pres.* Frank J. Hertel, *Sec.*  
 Walter West.....*Executive Secretary*

*Assistant Secretaries:* Dorothy C. Kahn, Grace F. Marcus,  
 Elisabeth Mills

THE COMPASS: Edited by the Staff

Entry as second-class matter at the post office at  
 Albany, N. Y.

Acceptance for mailing at the special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized June 28, 1924

*Subscription:* Non-Members \$1.00 per annum. Subscription of members of the Association included in annual dues.



## Special Letter from the Executive Committee of the National Board

*The following letter prepared by the Executive Committee of the National Board at its meeting on June 13-14 has been sent to chapter chairmen and to delegates and alternates to the 1941 Delegate Conference. This important communication to the chapters was prompted by Delegate Conference discussion and actions on the Executive Committee's work on evaluation of program and operations and by subsequent action of the National Board.*

*The letter gives a brief summary of developments at the conference and at the Board meeting held in Atlantic City on June 1. It also describes cooperation which the Executive Committee seeks from the chapters at this time.*

*A copy of the Progress Report of the Executive Committee has accompanied the Special Letter to chapter chairmen, delegates and alternates for such use as chapters may wish to make of it.*

### Actions of the 1941 Delegate Conference

A report on the Executive Committee's progress with its assignment was read to the Delegate Conference by the chairman of the Executive Committee. Discussion of the report itself was postponed until the report could be duplicated and distributed. Meanwhile, action was taken by a vote of 90 to 42 accepting the report and recommending that the Executive Committee be authorized to complete its work.

In the later consideration, several questions were raised and discussed regarding the procedure being followed, particularly in that specific criticisms and difficulties had not yet been taken up. There was criticism of the Executive Committee for presenting to the Conference some of its conclusions without its supporting evidence, such as that some of the difficulties had been found to relate to the Board's and the president's responsibilities and not only to those of staff; there was objection to the Board's allowing the Executive Committee to report to the Conference. There was also question as to the problem the committee noted regarding procedures chapters used in submitting complaints and as to the intent of the committee to obtain specifically opinions from the chapters.

A proposal was made and carried by a roll call vote of 75 to 71, to set up a special com-

mittee for this assignment, of which the Executive Committee of 7 would be a part and with 7 additional members selected from regions not already represented on the committee, in order to have personnel in the committee representative of a greater geographic territory. Five members of the Executive Committee announced individually to the Conference their intention to resign from the Executive Committee. Their reasons included beliefs that members could not serve simultaneously as members of the Executive Committee on a committee other than the Executive Committee; that such a plan was unworkable and expensive and also that the Conference action could be interpreted only as a lack of confidence in the committee's report and its plan for pursuit of its assignment. The Executive Committee announced also that the executive secretary had presented his resignation in order to leave the Executive Committee entirely free to take whatever action it wished, and that this had been rejected for the following reasons: "that now as never before continuity of service on the part of the staff is indispensable to the future of the Association; that it is the professional responsibility of the staff to stick by their jobs until completion of the evaluation now in process, recognizing their privilege at all times to appeal from the procedures used in that process in so far as they fail to conform to acceptable standards of professional practices; and that it is the professional responsibility of the membership to support and maintain its staff subject only to an evaluation conducted in conformity with professional standards advocated by the Association."

After considerable discussion the Conference reconsidered its previous action and placed the matter again in the hands of the National Board, leaving the progress report out of the conference record, and requesting the Board to continue its study as before.

### Actions of the National Board

At the meeting of the Board, June 1, the progress report of the Executive Committee was presented in accordance with regular procedure. (Copies of the report are attached to this letter, since the Board minutes which would normally include them are not yet available.) The Board accepted this as a progress report and took no action on its



content. After detailed discussion of scope, method and general plan, the Board reaffirmed the assignment and instructed the committee to continue according to approved plans.

Subsequent discussion reopened two issues: (1) the geographical issue, which some members believed was met by regionally elected members of the Board and (2) the issue as to whether the report should be directed to the discovery of facts or should be designed to achieve unity among conflicting forces in the Association. In view of these questions, the Executive Committee members who had withheld their resignations then submitted them and urged their acceptance. Mr. Howard and Mr. Granger, because of suggested overweighting of New York members, urged that they be replaced with members from other sections of the country.

The resignations of all members were accepted by a vote of 8 to 7, six of the affirmative votes being cast by the members of the Executive Committee. The president then appointed Miss Pendleton, Chairman, Mr. Atwater, and Miss Nairn to serve as a Nominating Committee. On the ensuing ballot four members of the previous committee were reelected; four new members were added, enlarging the committee to its constitutional limit and broadening its geographic representation. Members of the present Executive Committee are: Wayne McMillen, ex officio, Chicago; James Brunot, New York City; Eleanor Hearon, Denver; Frank Hertel, Twin City; Lillian Johnson, Washington State; Mrs. Aileen Kennedy Maccracken, Cleveland; Kenneth L. M. Pray, Philadelphia; Margaret Rich, Pittsburgh and Elizabeth Wisner, New Orleans. The president has designated Mr. Pray, third vice president, as acting chairman during the period of this study. Miss Johnson subsequently declined to serve and the president appointed Elizabeth Nairn, Nashville, to replace her from a list of alternates approved by the Board.

The Board recognized that this action involved increased cost and thus aggravated the problem presented by the Delegate Conference mandate to balance the budget.

### Plan of the Study

The Executive Committee's plan and method are outlined in its progress report presented to the Board. The report notes that preliminary examination of program failed to reveal the differences of opinion which had been stated originally as the basis of the issues under study. The committee

proceeded to restate as a frame of reference for further examination of criticisms, the powers and responsibilities of membership, the Delegate Conference, Board, officers, and staff, as these are defined in current policies and by-law provisions. This statement is also in the progress report.

The committee's next step will be to examine each criticism and complaint, to determine where responsibility for the problem lies, to be followed by the evaluation of the executive secretary's performance. After determining the criteria and procedures for the evaluation of the executive secretary and undertaking the evaluation itself, the committee expects to return to examination of program and alternative program proposals, to complete its full assignment from the Board. The full report will be presented to the Board for its action, and the Board in turn will report to the entire membership on the study.

A motion was passed at the Delegate Conference to the effect that the opinions of chapters on the various issues involved in the study should be solicited specifically by the committee as part of its study. The assignment to the committee (page 18 of the minutes of the March Board meeting) indicates that the whole range of issues regarding program, policies, procedures and administration are involved in the study and the Executive Committee would be glad to receive comments by chapters on any factors relevant to these issues.

### Immediate request of chapters

Since the committee's next step is to analyze reports of any specific experiences which have created problems for members or chapters, we are requesting now, particularly, that you send in to us any additional specific criticisms and suggestions regarding the Association's government, management and program which you wish to have included in the committee's study.

It is of great importance to the future of the Association that this study be completed at the earliest possible moment, and we are therefore requesting that this material be in the hands of the Executive Committee by July 15. The committee is fully aware of seasonal and other difficulties involved in immediate attention to this request. Because of the urgent necessity for completing this study as expeditiously as possible, however, so that the Association, locally and nationally, may again turn its full resources to the regular program and activities, the committee sees no way of avoiding a request which will require extraordinary efforts by chapter officials as well as by the Committee itself. This part of the present study dealing with specific



criticisms must be related to issues which are already known, and we believe therefore that with your cooperation the July 15th date should allow for full participation by chapters.

Outgoing chairmen are urged to get in touch with chairmen-elect, and new chairmen with their predecessors, so that changes in chapter administration will not interfere with the cooperation needed from the chapters at this time.

In submitting your material we request that:

1. It be addressed to Kenneth L. M. Pray, chairman, AASW Executive Committee, 130 East 22nd Street, New York, N. Y., and be sent in triplicate.
2. The following be given for each criticism or complaint:
  - a. Identifying data: nature of the difficulty, dates, names, etc.
  - b. The operations of the Association involved, such as field service, correspondence, membership dues, etc.
  - c. Steps taken by the chapter to clear the matter up through regular channels; to verify data, etc., and difficulties experienced in this process.

The Executive Committee wishes to reiterate that dealing with criticisms is only one part of its work and that as soon as those submitted by July 15 are disposed of and the evaluation of the executive secretary has been made, the committee will take up policies and program. The committee will welcome chapter suggestions and comments on these subjects as soon as possible.

#### The kind of study

The problem before the committee, as will be recalled from the material sent to chapters after the March Board meeting, was precipitated by criticisms leveled at the executive secretary; but the Board and Executive Committee found that basic program and policy issues determined by the Board and by the membership were also involved. It was therefore determined to make a broad-gauged study so as to find solutions for whatever problems were disclosed. This study is to include complaints directed against the staff, and is to attempt to determine where responsibility for difficulties lies. An evaluation of the executive secretary is to be included and is to be carried out in accordance with progressive professional practice of evaluation.

The committee is also working under directions from the Board to report freely and independently whatever the study discloses, whether it is possible or not to reconcile differences of opinion known to exist in the membership. Only such a report will safeguard the employment practices of the Association as those are advocated by us for social work agencies.

The committee believes these policies as to the nature of the study are of great importance and that the chapters should have the opportunity to know of them. Comments of the chapters on them would be welcomed by the committee.

#### Executive Committee in Session

The Executive Committee of AASW met in New York June 13 and 14 and continued work on its assignment to examine the operations, management, organization and program, including an evaluation of the performance of the Executive Secretary in accordance with accepted professional standards of employment and personnel practices.

Methods were worked out for circularization of chapter membership for opinions and complaints regarding questions under study. A letter was sent out June 14 to all chapter chairmen, delegates and alternates stating action of Delegate Conference and National Board meeting, including a copy of the Executive Committee's progress report, with a special request for complaints of management and operations by July 15, as well as for suggestions about and criticisms of progress and work as soon as possible.

A statement of policy was drawn up for the committee's consideration about the use of the staff and the part of the president in the inquiry, based upon a consideration of the nature of the assignment and a definition of the roles of the president, the staff and the executive secretary. The role of the president was defined as president of the Association and presiding officer of the governing board, and as a complainant in relation to documents presented. The staff was defined as the group responsible for implementing programs and operations. The executive secretary was defined as the person responsible for national office administration and the direction of program and operations, and as complainee in relation to documents presented by



the president, and as the person whose performance was to be evaluated. The Executive Committee, at their discretion, will consider the use of the staff and the president in relation to their roles and in relation to the type of service expected and needed from them and in accordance with sound professional and personnel practices, and in view of the specific subject under study. The committee followed this policy during its sessions and met on occasion in executive session.

Criteria were presented and accepted for the evaluation of complaints, and the committee proceeded to the consideration of the complaints in hand. Procedures were worked out for individual members to be assigned certain complaints for analysis as to problems, need for further documentary data, etc., in preparation for the next meeting. The committee in executive session evaluated complaints and took action on those in which no further data were necessary.

The committee, in accordance with a previous decision, appointed a member of the Executive Committee to confer with officers of the New Jersey chapter about complaints circularized by the chapter and the procedures employed.

Methods were considered for notifying the National Board members of progress, methodology, etc., and a letter was authorized to be sent to the Board on the present status of the committee's work. Tentative criteria for staff evaluation were submitted to the committee members for consideration in preparation for the next meeting. A date was set for the next meeting, July 19-20, in Chicago.

### Open Meetings of the AASW During National Conference of Social Work

The Committee on Chapters held an open meeting on Sunday morning, June 1. Mrs. Glenna B. Johnson, chairman of the committee, presided. Some 58 members were present, representing 40 different chapters. In addition to its full report which was distributed for the Delegate Conference and will be in the August COMPASS, the Committee

had prepared two documents for special consideration at the open meeting.

The first statement had to do with proposed criteria for chapters, to be used in admitting new chapters and in determining continuation of chapter status. The National Board had released this statement for informal discussion prior to its formal action adopting criteria for chapter organization. Chapter chairmen and their representatives raised various questions for discussion both as to the criteria and also about ways in which these standards would be applied. Special interest was expressed in suggestions that chapters be classified in some way so that responsibilities placed on such organized groups could be related more directly to differences in chapter size, kind, resources, etc.

Because the time was not sufficient on Sunday morning, the group decided to take up the second statement, Suggestions about Chapter Administration, at the end of the meeting on the Association in Action on Monday. At this time there was discussion of the principles of chapter administration which the committee had proposed as guides for successful operation, and chapter representatives presented experiences and devices which had been helpful in their chapters. The Committee's statement of suggested principles will be released shortly for inclusion in the Handbook for Chapter Chairmen.

\* \* \*

Because last year's meeting on "The Professional Association in Action" held during National Conference week was such a success, it was decided to hold a similar one this year. The session, held on June 2, was devoted to a discussion of selected chapter projects, presented with emphasis on objectives, method and achievement, stressing throughout the special contribution which the AASW was equipped to make, and any special problems that the chapters encountered in their work.

The following chapters reported at the meeting: San Diego, Toledo, Kansas City, Delaware, St. Joseph Valley, Kentucky, Dayton, North Carolina and Tennessee Division. The national office has available for distribution a limited number of copies of the project outlines as presented at the meeting.



## Report of the President

Opening the Delegate Conference in Atlantic City, **Wayne McMillen** presented the following as his interpretation of certain events in the Association's year and of certain questions before the Conference

**T**HE Delegate Conference of 1940 directed the National Board to attack four special problems that received attention at the Grand Rapids meeting.

One of these mandates related to Section 6 of the membership requirements. This is a question that has now become so hoary and venerable in this Association that it will soon be entitled to the respect due to age. Perhaps we are now at last approaching a day when we can consign it to an honorable retirement and thus free our minds for other considerations.

Section 6 permits the National Board to admit to membership in the Association persons who are not able to qualify under our regular technical membership requirements. Many of our ablest members have served on membership committees, both national and local. So far as I can ascertain, all of these people have come to the conclusion that Section 6 is incapable of being administered equitably. Clearly, any by-law which cannot be administered equitably ought to be either amended or abolished. This was, in effect, what was said in the discussion at Grand Rapids. The National Board decided to refer this matter to the National Membership Committee for study and recommendation. The National Membership Committee, of which Lucia Clow of Milwaukee is chairman, addressed itself seriously to this assignment and brought in a recommendation that has been approved by the National Board and will be presented to this Conference for action.

The second question referred by the 1940 Conference was also an old and hardy perennial; namely, the location of the national office. This question was transmitted for study and recommendation, not to one of the standing national committees, but to a special committee created for the purpose. Under the leadership of Florence Sytz of the New Orleans chapter this special committee has instituted a study of this question which, in the judgment of the National Board, is

unusually searching in scope and promises to result in a report of definitive character. If the assignment has not been completed by October 1, when the newly-elected officers and Board take charge, the present Board will recommend to its successors that this special committee be asked to carry its assignment to completion. Since the study has not been completed, the National Board is not able to report any final conclusions at this meeting. A report of progress will be presented, however, that will give the delegates a resumé of the information thus far assembled.

The remaining two mandates from the 1940 Conference were referred to a single special committee for study and recommendation. One of these questions relates to payment of the traveling expenses of members selected to represent chapters at the annual Delegate Conference. The other question relates to the division of responsibilities and powers between the National Board and the Delegate Conference.

At its meeting in October, 1940, the National Board noted that these two questions are very closely interrelated and for that reason decided to assign both problems to one committee. The pro-rating of expenses of delegates has naturally been an issue of special concern to the chapters on the Pacific Coast. The National Board therefore decided to give these chapters an opportunity to show the rest of the country how this problem could be solved. Accordingly, the members of this committee were drawn exclusively from the chapters on the West Coast, under the chairmanship of Mary Stanton of Los Angeles.

This special committee has labored long and hard at its assignment. Early in its deliberations, the committee reported that the analysis was leading directly into fundamental questions of structure and function. These are problems, of course, that require not only painstaking research but also that most difficult of all human activities — critical and creative thinking. At its meeting in



March, the National Board received from the chairman of this special committee a report of progress. This interim report indicated some of the specific questions the committee was examining and pointed out that a final report could be submitted only after further study. The National Board therefore decided not to press the special committee for a final report to submit to this Delegate Conference. The special committee was asked to continue its work and a motion was adopted to recommend to the new Board the continuation of this committee after October 1st, with due regard, of course, to any modifications indicated by actions taken at this Conference.

The Board also adopted a motion requesting the special committee to present a report of progress to this Conference, "indicating problems which have been identified, responses from the chapters, etc., and issues which it would be expected would be before the chapters the following year."

In compliance with this request, the special committee submitted its report a couple of weeks ago. This report was taken up by the Executive Committee at its May meeting. A majority of the Executive Committee agreed that the report should not be submitted to this Conference in its existing form, chiefly on the ground that it covered some of the same areas as the assignment recently given to the Executive Committee and that its preliminary recommendations would prove confusing to the membership. The special committee was accordingly asked to revise its report in such a way as to meet the objections of the Executive Committee. The special committee declined, however, to make this revision. Hence, we do not have a progress report from this committee to submit to this Conference.

In fairness to the special committee, I think it should be made clear that the parts of its report that the Executive Committee wished to have eliminated were presented to the Board meeting in March, and the Board did not at that time indicate that the committee was exceeding its assignment, nor did it request the committee to withhold its preliminary recommendations. Hence we of the Executive Committee must accept responsibility in this case. The National Board intended that the Conference should have a report from this committee, and I regret that none is available.

The future status of Miss Stanton's special committee is uncertain. If this Conference adopts the National Board's proposal to cre-

ate an earmarked fund for payment of delegates' expenses, one part of the committee's assignment will have been settled. The Executive Committee, therefore, decided to suggest to the National Board at its forthcoming meeting a review of the committee's assignment.

If Miss Stanton's committee is discontinued, the Board will have to find a way to proceed with the remaining part of the committee's assignment; namely, the preparation of a by-law to clarify the powers and functions of the Delegate Conference. The request that such a by-law be prepared came from last year's Delegate Conference. That request cannot be permanently disposed of by Board action. This Delegate Conference can supersede the request for a clarifying amendment if it wishes to do so. Unless it does so, the National Board will be obliged to find some way to carry out the obligation imposed upon it by the action taken at Grand Rapids. There will be general agreement in all parts of the Association, I think, that it would be a dangerous precedent for a Conference mandate either to go by default or to be superseded by action taken by any other body within the Association.

To be free from financial worries in this day and age would apparently put any individual practically in a class by himself. The same is even more true of organizations. In this respect our Association is not occupying a position of splendid isolation. We too are worried about money. The present National Board inherited from its predecessor a small deficit. It also inherited a plan worked out by the preceding Board for liquidating this deficit. This plan involved the mailing of letters of appeal to a selected list of our members — those presumably in the higher salary brackets. This work was carried on by a special committee under the leadership of Conrad Van Hyning of Washington. Raising money is a very uphill job in these days of competing appeals. The Association owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. Van Hyning and his committee for the hard work they invested in this effort to pull us out of the red. The results of this appeal were, nevertheless, disappointing. Less than half the amount sought was actually raised. Hence the National Board has decided to recommend a different method of meeting the deficit this year.

It is a well-known fact that boards which are in complete agreement on a majority of issues frequently develop difference of opinion where matters of finance are concerned. Our



Board has been no exception to that rule. Actions with respect to budgetary matters have sometimes been carried by narrow margins. In the main, the actions taken have followed the recommendations of the Financial Advisory Committee. At its meeting in October, 1940, the National Board approved a budget for 1941 that again envisaged a deficit. At the meeting in March, 1941, the Board revised this budget somewhat, and as a result the anticipated deficit will be smaller than the amount originally contemplated.

Nevertheless, it is clear that we face a deficit, part of which was carried over from last year and part of which is being incurred this year. This deficit must be liquidated in one way or another. A majority of the Board believes that the adjustment should be made through levying a fifty-cent assessment upon all members, to be collected in the four quarters beginning July 1, 1941. That proposal has been circulated among the chapters for consideration and will be taken up for discussion and action at a later session of this Conference.

The details of our fiscal situation will be presented later by the treasurer. One fact, however, perhaps merits some comment here. The long-continued upward trend in our membership has been in the current year retarded. We have, in fact, experienced a slight dropping off in membership. In spite of this fact, it now appears that revenue from dues will be somewhat larger than last year for reasons that will be made clear by the treasurer. The revenue from dues will be considerably smaller, however, than preceding boards had a right to expect on the basis of projecting the trend line into the future. In my opinion this situation can be remedied. There are people now practicing social work in many communities who are eligible for membership in our Association but nevertheless do not belong. We should attempt to ascertain why this is the case. Some chapters have tackled this problem locally and, through membership drives, have succeeded in bringing in some new members. There is some evidence to suggest that additional recruits could be obtained through increased promotional activity.

I happen to belong to a school of thought—now rapidly becoming outmoded, I am told, in all departments of public and private life—that believes in a pay-as-you-go system, except, of course, in genuine emergencies. In other words, I do not like the policy of adopting budgets that exceed the revenue in sight.

This practice seems to me particularly questionable in a professional organization, such as ours, that draws the bulk of its revenue from workers in the low salary brackets. What it amounts to is committing the membership to expenditures that exceed the revenue provided by the members. Then in the end, the members must be called to liquidate the deficit.

Nevertheless, it is clear that, in the present case, members of the National Board found themselves in a dilemma. With a deficit as small as ours, it is obvious that the budget could be balanced. It could not be balanced, however, without curtailing or modifying commitments approved by preceding boards. Previous boards have adopted certain personnel policies, salary scales and program plans that would have to be trimmed if the budget is cut. A majority of the Board therefore believed that the first obligation is to existing commitments and that alterations should be considered only after giving the membership an opportunity to meet the deficit by supplying additional funds.

I am confident that the National Board genuinely desires to manage the affairs of the Association in accordance with the wishes of the membership. If, in the discussion of finances later in this Conference, there is a clear expression of opinion to the effect that the membership favors balancing the budget each year by keeping expenditures within the limits of the normal revenue, I think the Board would be guided by that advice. This does not mean that the Board might not recommend changes in fiscal policy at later conferences. Such recommendations are appropriate because they give the members an opportunity to consider finances before the expenditures have actually been incurred. That is what the Board is doing this year, for example, with respect to the question of providing funds to pay traveling expenses of delegates at future conferences.

Obviously the expression of an opinion by this body as to a desirable budgeting policy for our Association has no necessary relationship to the question now pending concerning a special assessment to liquidate the current deficit. That question will be settled on its merits by this conference. A clear expression of opinion on the general budgetary policy would be of value chiefly in guiding the National Board in its budgeting for 1942 and subsequent years.

It is no news to this group that our Association undertook last summer an inquiry into



personnel practices in a private agency in St. Louis County, Mo. This inquiry had been completed before the present National Board took office. No activity undertaken by the Association within recent years has occasioned wider discussion. A great volume of correspondence poured in upon the National Board concerning this study, some of it from chapters and some from individual members of the Association. A digest of this correspondence has been prepared by Mrs. Aileen Kennedy Maccracken of Cleveland and is available for your consideration.

With respect to the St. Louis inquiry, our chief concern here, I would assume, is neither to fix blame nor to bestow laurels. Our primary interest is rather to wrest from this experience some concrete gains in terms of understanding and agreement as to the Association's responsibility in this area. There is reason to hope that some very definite gains will be forthcoming. The inquiry itself, and the extensive discussion it aroused, have forced a great many of us to think more persistently than before about personnel practices and the obligations of the Association with respect to them. Most of our members, in my opinion, believe that existing personnel practices in many agencies are far from good and that the improvement of these practices is a legitimate, and indeed, a basic interest of the Association. Differences of opinion apparently relate chiefly to methods and procedures. The National Board has taken steps to improve procedures. A special committee of the Board, under the leadership of Irene Farnham Conrad of Houston, has studied intensively the methods of handling grievances in this Association and in other professional organizations. This committee has developed a procedure that is clearly superior to anything we have had hitherto within this Association. The proposed procedure will be presented later for consideration by this group.

Section 3 of Article V of the by-laws of the Association relates to termination of the membership of any individual whose conduct is found to be not in harmony with the purposes of the Association. Under the by-laws the National Board is not permitted to exercise discretion as to whether it will or will not take up for review the membership status of any individual against whom charges are filed. If the charges are presented in writing and bear the signatures of at least three members in good standing, the National Board is obliged to take the case up for consideration.

One such case was presented to us during the past year. The only previous case arose in 1929. This earlier case appeared to offer the Board very little in the way of precedent. Accordingly, a special committee was set up, with James T. Brunot of New York City as chairman, to devise a method of dealing with such cases. After careful study, this committee has developed a plan for handling complaints against members. This plan was published in *THE COMPASS* for April, 1941, and will be taken up later for consideration by the Conference.

At its meeting in March, 1941, the National Board had before it a letter signed by fifteen members and endorsed by the New Jersey chapter, criticizing the national program and the work of the executive secretary, and calling for an investigation of the operations of the national office. In addition to the New Jersey letter, there were two other documents relating to the same problem. One was a memorandum from the staff to the National Board setting forth their views as to underlying faults in the Association's operations. The other was a memorandum which I, as president, submitted listing specific criticisms of the executive secretary's administration of the Association. The National Board referred these three documents to the Executive Committee. In a session held during a recess of the Board meeting, the Executive Committee attempted to assess the meaning of these documents and to devise a procedure for dealing with them. It was obviously impossible to call in representatives of the New Jersey chapter on such short notice. Hence most of the discussion related to the other memoranda. The president was asked to amplify his memorandum. In doing so, the president voiced the belief that a good many members are not satisfied with the existing national administration and that a question can legitimately be raised as to whether the national office has exercised the kind of leadership needed to weld our 11,000 members into a unified group, organically related to a program which the members understand and support. The executive secretary and all of the professional members of his staff were present at this meeting and each one was invited to express his views. Complete minutes of this meeting were prepared and have been mailed to all chapters, together with copies of the documents around which the discussion centered. Moreover, a brief statement was presented in the April *COMPASS*, setting forth the salient facts with respect to this matter.



Thus a genuine effort has been made by all concerned to inform the membership with respect to these developments.

The preliminary analysis of this problem made by the Executive Committee in March resulted in a recommendation "that the Executive Committee be authorized to proceed to prompt and thorough examination of the present program, policies, procedures, and operations of the Association" in relation to the present program and also in relation "to any specific alternative program and policy which the president or any other member may wish to propose." The National Board adopted this recommendation. Two meetings of the Executive Committee have been held since that time—one in April and one in May. The president asked Kenneth L. M. Pray of Philadelphia to serve as chairman *pro tem* during the period of this evaluation. Mr. Pray will later report to this conference as to the progress made to date.

Undoubtedly all of us regret the re-emergence of an issue of this type in the Association—especially in a time such as the present when all of our personal and organizational problems seem dwarfed by the scope of the catastrophes that are engulfing the world. But it is no help to anyone to ignore or to suppress problems that actually exist. We must face them with honesty and deal with them fairly and courageously.

The national committees are at the heart of the program-building activities of the Association. In the earlier days the membership of these committees was drawn largely from chapters within easy reach of the national office. As membership increased and resources grew larger, the base of participation was expanded by appointing members from more distant points. Although this change was an improvement, it was not a complete solution. A widely representative national committee is a very expensive proposition. Moreover, the members from distant points cannot easily absent themselves from their jobs if an investment of five or six days in traveling time is required. Thus, because it is both costly to the Association and time-consuming to some of the members, a truly representative national committee cannot meet as frequently as it should meet in order to advance its assignment effectively.

This year the National Board adopted the plan of regionalizing both the standing committees and the special committees. A headquarters city was named for each committee and the members were appointed from chap-

ters in the immediate vicinity. For example, New Orleans was the headquarters city for the Special Committee on Location of the National Office, and all members of that committee were drawn from the New Orleans chapter and from the Louisiana State chapter. San Francisco was the headquarters city of the special committee to study problems relating to the Delegate Conference. The National Membership Committee was in Chicago; the national Committee on Personnel Practices in Columbus; the national Committee on Chapters in Buffalo; the national Committee on Government and Social Work in Washington, D. C. The Personnel Committee and the Financial Advisory Committee were both centered in New York City.

There was some precedent for this system of regionalizing the national committees. Experimentation had been carried on in the immediately preceding period with small steering committees. The steering committees attempted to broaden their base by appointing a list of correspondents scattered throughout the country who were supposed to give advice and counsel by mail.

Although several problems remain to be worked out, the plan adopted by the National Board this year appears to be a step in advance. According to this plan, the headquarters of the committees will normally be shifted to a near-by city "at intervals of not less than one year." In this way some members can be kept on for more than one year to provide continuity. For example, the national Committee on Chapters, located this year in Buffalo, might next year be shifted to Pittsburgh or Detroit or some other nearby chapter which has supplied this year at least one member for that committee.

Obviously these regionalized national committees can meet frequently and at less cost than a committee with members drawn from all over the country. The chief danger of this plan is that the point of view might be provincial. The National Board recognized this danger and has suggested a means to overcome it. Many chapters have local committees parallel in function, and sometimes also in name, with the national committees. The National Board recommended that these local committees cooperate with the national committee and that a local liaison person or group be named to maintain contact between the local committee and the corresponding national committee. If this plan works, it will be greatly superior to a nationally-appointed list of correspondents,



because it will mean local discussion of problems requiring national formulation, by persons locally selected because of their known interest in or knowledge of the subject matter at hand. In this way the thinking at the grass roots in all parts of the country will be channeled expeditiously to the central point at which formulation takes place.

It is not possible as yet to predict how well this plan will work. Obviously it will not operate automatically. Whether it works at all or not will depend upon whether the national staff believes in it and will promote it effectively.

I cannot summarize here the numerous activities of our standing committees. These committees were given their assignments at the October Board meeting and each of them has made progress which will be reported to you in detail later.

Last autumn the National Board received a suggestion from a member that *THE COMPASS* be published, not solely as a staff function, but rather under the guidance of an editorial committee selected from the membership. The Board decided not to make any change in the present arrangement. The Board authorized the appointment of a committee, however, to study *THE COMPASS* and to make recommendations as to what type of publication it should be. Under the chairmanship of Margaret Rich of Pittsburgh, this committee enlisted the aid of a number of chapters to assist in this analysis. According to present plans a report on the findings of this committee will be available in the near future.

During the past year two new chapters have been added to our roster—East Tennessee and Mississippi. We are glad to have chapters in these areas, and we extend a welcoming hand to these two new groups. Chapter affiliation undoubtedly has many advantages over membership in non-chapter territory, and we believe our members in East Tennessee and in Mississippi will find ways to utilize effectively this new channel for professional expression and professional development.

In his presidential report last year, my predecessor, Harry Greenstein of Baltimore, made the following statement: "... a more clearly articulated program will give to all our members a more concrete idea of our total program and leave them less puzzled as to the function and purpose of the AASW. . . . Unfortunately there are still too many

members of the AASW who regard their membership merely as a matter of certification."

Mr. Greenstein's wise observations should not be lost to view. We should, on the contrary, face realistically certain recent developments in the field of practice that may operate to retard our growth. I refer here to the requirement of the Social Security Act that the states must administer the federally-aided social services under a merit system. Formerly membership in the AASW was often the passport to one of these jobs. Henceforth those who can compete successfully in examinations will be employed in the public services whether they belong to a professional organization or not. Membership in the AASW will therefore probably be increasingly sought only by those who regard the affiliation as an end in itself and not merely as a means to an end.

Our major task, then, is to make membership a desirable objective in itself. This means that our program must be one that social workers understand and believe in. We must find a way to sharpen our objectives and to help our members to see that we are making measurable progress towards our goals. We must also effect an articulation of activity such that members see the direct influence of their local work in the ultimate formulations and accomplishments at the national level.

Facing facts is hard but wholesome. We should therefore acknowledge truthfully that at present a large number of our members do not participate in any form of Association activity. Undoubtedly many of those inert members derive some occasional benefit from their membership. The real loser is the Association. These are qualified people. They are all practicing social workers who are in constant touch with data relating to the critical issues of our time. We need their professional contribution even more than we need their dues. We must find ways to give them a sense of organic relationship to a program to which they have so much to contribute. We will be better off in the long run to tolerate a few mistakes made by the many than to have everything done right by the few. Our objective, as John Dewey has so well said, must be "to make the individual a sharer or partner in the associated activity so that he feels its failure as his failure and its success as his success."



## Comments on the Association's Year

Report of the Executive Secretary to the  
1941 Delegate Conference

**T**WENTY years ago next month at the membership meeting of the National Social Workers Exchange, convened in Milwaukee, a new organization was born to herald the new conviction that the practice of social work was emerging as a profession. The new organization was the American Association of Social Workers.

In the intervening twenty years, social work has changed a great deal. The relation of social work to the nation has been transformed, and so has its relation to the various agencies which promote and protect and develop the things that are found to be socially useful about social work. In this period the Association has grown from a handful of interested social workers to 11,000 members. It started with no recognition of local organization. It now has 86 chapters of various sizes and types of organization. It has become one of the foremost voluntary factors in the field of social work.

On this 20th birthday prominence is given to some issues about the program and the management of the Association which are serious in many ways. The staff does not wish to minimize the grave and urgent necessity for the Association to review its plan of organization, the nature of its activities in relation to social work, the particular kinds of program activities it is to engage in, and the kind and quality of services which it wants and gets from its staff. These are the responsibilities of the National Board of the Association, with final determination of plans and policies to be reaffirmed or re-established by the membership.

The active stage of these issues, we can see, produces some discomfort and dismay for the membership, as there appear to be personal as well as organizational aspects to it. In our field, as other experience recently has shown, we are not as used to dissociating the personal from the organizational or professional factors in open discussion. Some gain in this direction may result from this experience of the Association, however unpleasant it may be to get accustomed to it. The executive secretary is probably the most directly involved, and as such hopes that the issues may

be pursued and reported regardless of personal implications.

A second problem for the membership and the staff is the drain on the resources which under other circumstances would be devoted to pursuing the objectives and developing the program of the Association. In so far as weaknesses can be uncovered and the operation of the Association can be improved, the time and energy spent may be turned to a net gain; especially if the Association can learn during this process to deal more directly and systematically with problems of this kind than it has sometimes in the past.

It is important to the staff that the National Board and the Executive Committee have expressed the assurance that while these issues were under study, the Association's program would go ahead on present rules and current decisions with all normal capacity, subject only to the drain on time and resources in carrying on the study itself, which is no inconsiderable item. This assurance means that the Association is a going concern; that a careful study and a full report will be made to the membership; that such changes as may be found desirable will be made in an orderly and constructive way; and that the activities and program will be the main concern as at any other time. It means that the Association is not a house of cards, either as it is put together or as it is to be improved; but rather that it has been firmly rooted in a respect for the practicing membership as the basis for its program and its methods of operation. A professional association can lose its democratic organization only if it deviates from its professional aims and loses sight of the essential source of its aims, objectives, and activities, which must always be the practice and the practitioners of the profession.

While these issues, which have been suddenly opened up for discussion will be fully reported in the near future, there are other problems in the Association which underlie our activities, on which persistent efforts are directed and progress made but for which we have not found any simple remedies. To understand the part they play in holding back the expected accomplishments and returns is important.



There is, for instance, the problem of distance. I mean the number of miles between chapters and between members. We have found no means within the resources of the Association to make up for the inequalities in the extent to which members may have active group participation in Association affairs. It has not been possible to develop for the Montana member as much chapter activity as has been available to the member in Chicago or Cleveland or New Orleans. It has been equally impossible for the Georgia Chapter to make its programs as available to the member a hundred miles away from the only logical meeting place as to the members in Atlanta who constitute 80 per cent of the total. A member in a Western Colorado county, not affiliated with any chapter, is not able to use his Association membership in the same ways as members in Denver.

Stubborn as this problem is, the Association has made headway with it, at least with parts of it. As its resources have grown more has been accomplished in bridging distances, and operating devices and activities have been invented to reduce the inequalities which geographic location has created for participation by many members.

The Committee on Chapters' report for this year records the problems which the Committee finds are in the way of full chapter development. Those are the problems which the Association is required to deal with in order to make the necessary gain against the isolation, geographic and professional, of the professional social worker. It is in the development of these basic organizational units within the Association that the staff of the national AASW sees its major function. To a large extent the staff is engaged directly on chapter problems; but in addition, as its time and effort are put into committee work, and into its wide list of contacts, its work is brought back to the chapters as the centers through which the membership may be reached most directly. The difficulties which, as the Committee on Chapters points out, are known to most experienced chapter administrators, are largely the difficulties which face the Association in developing a fully integrated professional membership.

To those problems noted by the Committee on Chapters, the staff might add another with which the Association should learn to deal. The Association as a professional organization is presumed to be an arena in which all professional members may take part as professional equals, free of any of the agency officialdom which might mark the difference

between executive and worker, or teacher and student. It is one of the basic problems of the Association, as it is brought to the surface in field visits of the staff and through various other channels that members have not been freed from the deeply rooted castes which marked the pre-professional era in social work. Chapter and membership morale are undermined by any vestige of a caste system, and the function of the Association is obscured, both for the few and the many, by any form in which it persists in professional activities.

For this difficulty there is no simple or single remedy. The improvements we have noted seem to be associated with the increasing professional equipment of workers and their ability to deal, by their practical knowledge, with the subjects of professional activity. It is, in a sense, a learning and experiencing process, and the staff is able to report that while it is present in many places and takes various forms, the activities which emphasize the professional instead of the simply organizational problems of social work, and those which deal with the worker's experience instead of with organization and promotion, are means by which this problem is being dealt with successfully.

A third problem which underlies many of the issues which are active in chapter and national discussion is that of the lack of unity in the Association as to the membership requirements. When it is recognized that the membership requirements are the major determinant, in the long run, of the direction and objectives of the Association, it is not surprising that a member or chapter in which doubt exists about the requirements is not an ardent advocate of the Association's program. The same is true where there is no strong leadership which is able to develop positive conviction that the professional selective membership type of organization is one at least of the potent and effective methods of dealing with the present and still unsolved personnel problems in social work.

Such action as that taken a year ago by the Delegate Conference, in reaffirming the Association's reliance on a selective membership standard as a basis for program and organization, is strong support for a growing unity in the membership. The discussions in chapters which preceded it, and the resolution which records the official membership opinion are strong elements in basic improvement in the Association's position.

It should not be overlooked, in analyzing



this position, that in so far as the Association's membership standards are still used by some as a certification, or as an element of status, there is a certain amount of coercion exercised by the member's need of that certification or status. A member of a political party can vote another ticket when he is dissatisfied. Members of the AASW who do not believe in its objectives or its program, who find themselves taxed for these very objects of their disbelief, but who, because of an occupational need, cannot shift to some other kind of organized effort, are part of the problem which this Association still faces of development of a fully integrated professional membership. Actions already taken have begun to dissociate membership status from certification. Relaxation of this status factor may slow up the growth of the Association so far as members are concerned; but in the long run the membership growth must rest on interest and enthusiasm and not on coercion. When public and official certification of social workers is secured, the Association will be able to divest itself of a burden it has carried, with great benefit to the public, but which the public should assume.

It would be misleading to think that the task of a professional association can be a simple one, because, as your staff views it, the professional association cannot escape the problems which face the profession itself. In a field of work which has changed as dramatically as social work has in its short professional history and is still undergoing transformation of drastic nature, the problem is magnified. Such change and development is everyone's aim, but it is harder to live through than to look back on. The swifter the stream, the dizzier are the side eddies, and the greater is the back wash. It is not a process by which the same elements keep a unity; but rather a shifting of strengths and weaknesses, of relationships of new and old, of former and future. Adequacies of one era become the obsolescent of another.

Professional development in social work leaves many things behind it. The recognition that the validity of the total program rests on the success with which a human problem is dealt with, transfers the public concern from organization formulas and promotions, around which the interest centered in the pre-professional stage, to the practice itself and to the worker, to his equipment, to his specialized knowledge, to the soundly administered agency, to the specialized ability of the worker to observe with the practiced eye and to make his discoveries known. This development has

been going on at a rapid pace creating a pyramid of new concepts and problems and adjustments for social work and social workers.

While these changes create difficulties for social work in being understood by the public and by itself, they are particularly the problems in the field of work of a professional association. Concerned basically with the quality of professional service, and so with the persons who embody the knowledge and ability to perform the service, the Association finds itself in the center of each of the new problems which come to light and take shape.

Last year at the Delegate Conference a program outline for the Association's activities was presented and approved. It contained nine general headings and a number of indicated subjects under each. In support of its report the Program Committee also presented a statement as to the nature of the program and a further list of examples of forty or more current activities on which chapter committees, staff, and board of the Association were working. As many of these activities continue, this report is not planned as a corrected list but deals with some of the special features of the program and of staff activities during the past year.

The adopted program for the year listed nine main headings as follows:

- Social work personnel
- Professional education
- Standards of professional conduct and performance
- Employment practices
- Need of social services, and their organization
- Professional action
- Membership requirements
- Social work practice
- Integration of Association's resources for program production

Of the nine classifications, three (6, 7 and 9) denote activities which seek to improve the usefulness of the Association's own resources and methods of operation. Staff members are involved daily in applying the experience which the Association has accumulated as to the ways in which chapters and members may use their membership to extend into professional action the efforts which they as individuals are able and willing to make.

Every operation of the staff, directly or indirectly, is related to the ninth and last classification, the Integration of the Association's Resources for Program Production. The staff operations set a whole series of relations with chapters in motion. There has been, as one of the results of the increased staff, a



notable advance which can be seen administratively in the study and development of the Association's relationship to the problems of chapter administration. In addition to the staff work which is reflected in the activities of the Committee on Chapters, it can be reported that there has been marked development in many chapters with recognition of the interplay of chapter and national influence and stimulation. There is progress in creating long-needed means of reporting on chapters and the enterprises in which they are engaged; there has been more offered for the use of chapter administration than at any time in the past, both as to means of creating more effective organizations and as to material and other program resources which they may be able to put to the use of their members.

There has always been a struggle by the staff for opportunities for direct contact with chapters and membership. In no less definite terms has the demand for field work by the staff come from the chapters. It is necessary to guard against the error of assuming that field visits to chapters have any unaccountable potency, but it is equally fallacious to assume that anything deeper than a surface understanding of the problems of the national association on the one hand, and those of the chapter on the other can be built up and maintained by correspondence or by generalized systems of bulletins.

The year just past has given the staff its first typical amount of field work under the present staff organization, and has also made it possible to scrutinize more carefully than at any previous time the constructive elements in this process, as these are discovered by the staff. Perhaps positive results cannot be seen too clearly, and perhaps when these results can be noted the relation between them and field work of the staff will not be discernable, but the staff is confident that the 50 to 100 per cent increase of this part of its work has initiated a revitalization of the program and the activities of the Association. About two-thirds of the chapters appear on the year's list. What needs to be noted is the other third, and the fact that there are still some chapters which staff members have never been able to visit and others with which contacts have been irregular and infrequent. Lack of continuity in chapter organizations is a complicating factor, as in some cases a two year interval has disclosed a wholly new chapter group, unable to connect one contact with the previous one.

Field work should continue to develop in extent and frequency as an effective means of

proving that the national association is but the sum of the chapters and members, and as an effective reminder that the national office and staff is created by a pool of the resources of the total membership, and is the office and staff of the whole Association.

To avoid a catalogue of activities which would be too long to read, this report plans to present a few aspects of the program activities which have had particular emphasis in the past 12 months.

Immediately after the last delegate conference had discussed and adopted a platform of objectives agreed on as the aims of social work and the bases on which to seek further social gains, the whole national situation was profoundly changed by events in other parts of the world. The pivotal value of basic principles for a professional program was illustrated by the adaptability of the Association's platform, based on principles for further advance under current conditions, to a new emergency phase of national activity.

Not only has the national defense program involved the Association's resources for working on public welfare issues, but it has involved the staff likewise in issues of personnel, such as the proposed roster of social work skill; matters of educational plans and policies; and problems of recruiting and selection. Meanwhile it has been a major staff principle, supported by committee actions, to base its activities on the assumption of continued development and expansion of the social services as a vital defense measure.

The Committee on Government and Social Work will report at greater length on the activities of the Association concerning public social services and defense measures. No adequate summary of the work of the Association for the past twelve months could omit mention of these activities as major staff engagements from early June of last year, with no let up until the present.

With the longer perspective of continuing staff service, it is also important to mention that many important recommendations emphasized for years by the Association and its platform, as reflected from the practical experience of social workers, have become in recent months the recommendations of governmental agencies. The Social Security Board's recommendations for 1941 legislation are a good example. The Association might be pardoned for some satisfaction that it has been able to marshal the practical experience of the profession, especially as it would want to acknowledge the soundness of the Social Security Board's conclusions.



The National Membership Committee's report for the year reflects another major staff operation in exploration of the Association's relationship to the professional development in several fields of social work. Staff work on the problem of ethical eligibility questions has also contributed a major step in the direction of further understanding, and perhaps improvement, of the membership standard and administration.

In the discussion of questions about the Association's program there has been mentioned the need for greater focus and concentrated emphasis on major essentials. The need and desire for these things is not an issue as it is not disputed, although there may be differences about the extent to which selection for focus and emphasis is more practical on an arbitrary basis than by directing their development through utilizing the more or less unpredictable issues which arise in the experience of the membership. The Association's work on the social work aspects of the defense program is one example of the way in which the Association activities are focused on matters of current concern. Another example of the way in which activities emphasize various parts of the program is the St. Louis Employment Practices Study.

In the 1940-41 program as adopted last year by the Delegate Conference were the following items:

3. *Standards of Professional Conduct and Performance.* The discretionary powers implicit in the practice of a profession are of such social importance that its practitioners must safeguard their right to exercise these powers by imposing on themselves and their fellows a professional discipline. Recommended next steps are:

*Definition of issues of professional conduct.* Collection and analysis of materials from chapters on issues of professional conduct or performance.

*Work on formulation of code.* To be effected through cooperation with chapters now active on formulations of codes.

*Study of experience of other professional organizations.* To collect information about problems and methods in setting and enforcing a standard.

*Improving methods for enforcing standard.* Consideration of possible procedures for withdrawing membership status on grounds of unprofessional conduct.

4. *Employment Practices.* The Association's activity has produced increasing recognition of the importance of personnel and employment practices in the effective administration of agencies. Immediately ahead are activities to promote:

*Development of recorded employment policies* within social agencies. Study of obstacles to formulating current policies by agencies. Study of problem of application of principles to conditions of individual agency.

*Improved standards for employment conditions* in social agencies. Study of factors in agencies and communities influencing the definition of recommended standards.

*Study of leaves for professional study* and staff development. Further definition of reasons for and conditions of such leaves. Study of current provisions for educational leaves.

*Improved measurement of competent performance.* Continued examination of current criteria for measurement. Study of methods of measurement.

*Better protection of employment* in the interests of competent service. Development of sound means of protection. Improvement of Association facilities for handling personnel issues.

It is not the intention here to support the St. Louis study or report, and it is obviously not appropriate to appraise, in this report, the way in which the work was done. Regardless of the issues which have been raised by members about the study, which can be seen in the "Comments on the St. Louis Report" as summarized by Mrs. Maccracken for the National Board, it should not be overlooked by the membership that focus and emphasis have been given to a vital section of the adopted program which will carry over into the coming year and will have broad and deep influence on the growth and influence of the profession.

One kind of activity by which the staff serves the Association is by putting the professional program into effective relationship with the activities of other organizations, in and outside of social work, whose interests touch in various ways those of the profession. It would obviously be difficult to report here the content, discussions, and negotiations or to list all the kinds of organizations with



which the Association staff has relationship during a year. A partial list might serve the membership, however, as an indication of the extent and variety of organized efforts which find, through the AASW, a means for contact and cooperation with this profession. Such a list would include such voluntary organizations as:

- National agencies in public and private social work
- Other social work professional associations
- The American Association of Schools of Social Work
- The Civil Service Assembly
- The Civil Service Reform League
- Labor unions, particularly the social work unions
- The League of Women Voters
- The American Association of University Women
- Economy and tax leagues, chambers of commerce, etc.
- Consumers' League
- Newspapers, news services, and periodicals
- Housing organizations
- Social Science Research Council
- Councils of Social Agencies
- Public welfare departments
- Pan-American organizations
- Professional school alumni associations
- Social work student organizations

The following governmental agencies should be noted:

- Alien registration administration
- Selective service system
- Food stamp authorities
- Coordinator's office, health and welfare
- Advisory Committee on Family Security
- Advisory Committee on Information Service
- Morale Division—Joint Army and Navy Committee
- Consumers Advisory Defense Council
- Defense Advisory Commission
- Congressional Committee to Investigate the Interstate Migration of Destitute Citizens
- Works Progress Administration
- Social Security Board
  - Bureau of Public Assistance
  - State Technical Advisory Service
  - Bureau of Employment Security
  - Bureau of Old Age and Survivors' Benefit
- United States Children's Bureau
- National Roster of Scientific and Specialized Personnel
- United States Civil Service Commission
- United States Census Bureau
- National Resources Planning Board
- Farm Security Administration
- Indian Service

Unnoticed, and behind the scenes in the national office, a considerable business is conducted in membership administration, in dues collection, in accounting with chapters on membership lists, dues, and addresses. As a basis for program development, the office maintains in circulation the correspondence and reports and minutes which come from

the chapters, and the material from other sources which is found to bear on the activities in which the chapters are engaged. These operations have been organized so that the professional staff is largely free to work on the program activities of the Association.

Without attempting to account for the time of the staff, it might be noted that the requirements in time are greater than the staff can cover in its working time; and it is perhaps worth noting that whatever is done effectively does not finish a job, but rather starts varying numbers of new ones.

No one but the executive secretary would be in a position to know how much the output of the staff of the Association has increased under its present organization. Many others, I am sure, must share the pride I have that the Association and its program, and the cause of professional development in social work have reached the stage where the exceptional capacities of Grace Marcus, Elisabeth Mills and Dorothy Kahn can be engaged as the professional members of a staff of fifteen which would be hard to match, and which is at your service.

#### THE NATIONAL ROSTER

As reported in the May COMPASS, questionnaires will shortly go to all members of the Association from the National Roster. A check list for the field of social work to be used by the Roster as a kind of finding list will be enclosed. It is possible that these questionnaires may arrive during the vacation period due to congestion in the government printing office. It is important for every member of the Association to cooperate in returning the questionnaire as promptly as possible, and it is therefore suggested that persons going on vacation before the questionnaire arrives should arrange to have it forwarded. We are informed that if the Roster for our field were now available, it would have been possible to use it on several recent occasions, and its value in locating appropriate talents to be utilized in connection with the defense program will increase as time goes on.

It is suggested that the Roster be mentioned in chapter meetings, committee meetings, and other groups in which members gather so as to promote as complete returns as possible.



## The Report of the Treasurer

*The following report, presented by the Association's treasurer, James Brunot, to the Delegate Conference explains the sources of the budgetary deficit and gives the findings and recommendations of the Financial Advisory Committee.*

As indicated in the April COMPASS, two financial proposals have been placed before the Conference by the National Board in order to enable the membership to determine the course of action to be followed in meeting the Association's present financial problem. Since the Conference, in considering

financial matters, presumably will wish to consider them in relation to the decisions to be made on these proposals, I shall present my report as Treasurer in the form of a discussion directed primarily toward clarification of the financial problem on which the Conference must act, and as my report of the

## Financial Statement for 1940

CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1940			
BALANCE, JANUARY 1, 1940.....		\$3,142.07	
Unpaid obligations, January 1, 1940—paid in 1940.....		1,120.00	
AVAILABLE BALANCE JANUARY 1, 1940.....			\$2,022.07
BUDGET RECEIPTS:			
Membership dues .....	\$65,122.83		
Additional contributions .....	977.00		
Miscellaneous .....	781.90		
Total Budget Receipts .....		\$66,881.73	
BUDGET DISBURSEMENTS:			
Salaries .....	\$42,646.95		
Office expenses .....	11,199.95		
Ediphones .....	965.64		
Committee travel .....	3,561.80		
Staff travel .....	4,081.35		
Compass .....	3,438.97		
Publications .....	146.62		
Conference .....	1,559.30		
Total Budget Disbursements .....		67,600.58	
Excess Budget Disbursements over Receipts.....			\$718.85
NON-BUDGET RECEIPTS:			
Chapter dues received .....	\$25,771.03		
Rental grant—Russell Sage Foundation.....	2,167.00		
Reimbursement of chapter dues advanced.....	300.00		
Reimbursement of personal travel expenses advanced.....	892.28		
Federal Social Security taxes withheld from employees.....	291.54		
Total Non-Budget Receipts .....		29,421.85	
NON-BUDGET DISBURSEMENTS:			
Chapter dues disbursed to chapters.....	\$25,771.03		
Rent against grant .....	2,167.00		
Chapter dues advanced .....	300.00		
Personal travel expenses advanced.....	892.28		
Payment of Federal Social Security taxes withheld from employees .....	307.50		
Federal Social Security taxes applicable to prior years and interest thereon .....	270.91		
Deposit with Transcontinental & Western Air, Inc., in connection with Air Travel Plan Agreement.....	425.00		
Total Non-Budget Disbursements .....		30,133.72	
Excess Non-Budget Disbursements over Receipts.....			711.87
Excess of Total Disbursements over Total Receipts.....			\$1,430.72
BALANCE, December 31, 1940.....			\$591.35

**Note:** As the deposit for air travel with the TWA is available for 1941 expenses, there was an actual deficit of \$439.14 at December 31, 1940, taking unpaid bills in the amount of \$1,455.49 into consideration.



Recommendations of the Financial Advisory Committee.

The annual statement, published in the February-March COMPASS and reproduced here, indicates that the Association ended the year 1940 with a deficit. A brief article accompanying the financial statement, and a more extensive report presented to the Board at its meeting in March, 1941, indicated that a further deficit must be anticipated in 1941 if we maintain our present national program without providing additional financial resources.

To refer briefly to some of the figures:

Our net deficit on December 31, 1940, was \$439.14. This is the difference between the total of unpaid bills at that time and the total assets consisting of cash and a deposit with the Transcontinental-Western Airlines.

At the March meeting of the Board, the budget for 1941 was revised downward to the lowest possible level consistent with maintenance of the Association's present program. Expenditure items were reduced to \$68,600 as compared with \$69,875 as provided in the 1941 budget as set up in October and compared with \$71,700 provided in the original budget for 1940. Estimates of income for the year also were revised in the light of the latest available information on membership dues, special contributions and miscellaneous income. At that time the 1941 income was estimated at \$67,725, which is \$875 less than the authorized expenditures. The national budget now in effect, therefore, anticipates a net deficit at the end of 1941 totalling \$1,314.14 of which \$439.14 was carried over from 1940, and \$875 added during 1941.

The question is—What course of events brought us to this point? Comments and questions by members of the Association, included in correspondence addressed to the Treasurer and otherwise coming to the attention of the national office or the Board, indicate that an effort to clarify some aspects of this question is in order.

First, the 1940 deficit and that of 1941 cannot be attributed to haphazard budget planning. In March, 1939, the National Board increased the expense side of the budget to supply additional staff service which was being urged by the Association membership and by the chapters. That expansion of the national budget authorized expenditures in excess of anticipated income from membership dues. There was, however, specific provision for meeting this deficiency; at the be-

ginning of 1939 the national treasury had on hand a surplus of \$2,000.

During 1939 an additional operating surplus of more than \$2,100 was accumulated. This reserve was available for meeting deficits which might be incurred during the period when the program was expanded in anticipation of future growth of normal income. The expansion plan was presented in detail at the 1939 Delegate Conference.

During 1939 the Association's national staff was admitted to full coverage under the Social Security Act. This was in line with the policy and platform of the Association but it did involve an additional financial burden. During 1939, 1940 and 1941, the Association has paid, and will pay, a total of approximately \$4,400 in unanticipated Federal Social Security taxes.

In the light of this further expense, the National Board reviewed the budget and reaffirmed its decision to carry out the proposed program expansion. Reserves on hand were adequate to meet all expenditures until the end of 1940. A plan was approved and presented at last year's Conference to meet the deficit anticipated at the end of 1940 by seeking special contributions totalling at least \$3,000. Authorization of additional expenditures was, therefore, based on deliberate consideration.

The 1940 deficit was not the result of unauthorized expenditures. Budgetary disbursements during the year were, in effect, \$2,700 less than those authorized in the 1940 budget as approved by the Board and presented to the Delegate Conference last year.

The deficit was not due to any specific project undertaken during the year, such as the St. Louis inquiry. The cost of the St. Louis inquiry was reviewed by the Board at its meeting in March, 1941, and a statement was prepared and circulated indicating the Board's conviction that the St. Louis inquiry had no more relationship to the 1940 deficit than any other part of the Association's varied activities.

The deficit was not due to a shrinkage of income from membership dues. Dues in 1940 totalled almost \$1,000 more than in 1939.

Several tangible factors did contribute to the deficit.

One was the cost of Social Security taxes already mentioned.

A second factor was the over-optimistic estimate of increased income. It has already been pointed out that income from regular dues was \$1,000 higher in 1940 than in 1939; at



the same time it was \$900 under the estimate on which the budget was based. If the full amount estimated had actually been received, our 1940 deficit would have been eliminated.

The original estimates of income from special contributions were likewise over-optimistic. If the goal of \$3,000 had been reached, our deficit for 1940 would have been eliminated; our working balance of \$2,000 would have been maintained; and we would have had ample resources to finance the national program in 1941. Actually, the total of special contributions received before December 31, 1940, was less than \$1,000.

The course of events which has led us to a financial situation requiring decisive action, therefore, involves a number of factors: first, a deliberate and reasonable expansion of national expenditures in anticipation of increased income; second, a desirable but costly new obligation to pay Social Security taxes; third, a failure to realize increased income as rapidly as anticipated; and, fourth, an effort to avoid retrenchment until we have considered every possible way of meeting commitments and fulfilling plans already agreed upon.

So much for the events which have led to our present financial problem.

In 1941 we face a different issue from that presented in 1939 and 1940. Though we decided last year that it was reasonable and logical to undertake a program that would cost more than our assured income, that may not be the case in 1941.

In 1941 we began the year with an actual deficit instead of a surplus. In 1941 we have a more accurate knowledge of the possibilities and limitations involved in securing funds through special contributions.

The 1941 budget, as revised by the Board in March, anticipated an operating deficit of \$875 which is less than 1.5% of the annual income. This, combined with the deficit carried over from last year, makes a total deficiency of \$1,314, which is less than 2% of the annual income. This is a small deficiency and one which should arouse no special concern if we had not already exhausted our normal working reserve and if the Board had not already cut expenditures to the bone.

Two weeks ago the Financial Advisory Committee met to consider our financial situation in the light of figures for the first four months of the year in order to prepare data for this report to the Conference. On the authority of the Financial Advisory Committee, I wish to report the committee's find-

ings and recommendations, even though the latest figures have not yet been presented to the National Board.

Up to April 30 of this year, income from regular dues, contributing and sustaining payments and miscellaneous sources was well ahead of estimates and well ahead of figures for the corresponding period last year. Dues are being paid more promptly, lapses have decreased, new memberships have increased, and extra contributions and miscellaneous income have increased. The Financial Advisory Committee estimates with confidence that the national income for 1941 will exceed the original estimate by a minimum of \$675. This will mean a net increase over the actual figures for 1940 of more than \$1,500. If this were the whole story, the Financial Advisory Committee would recommend that the Conference reject the proposal to provide additional resources.

On the expense side of the budget, the committee will recommend, however, that the Board again revise the budget to restore amounts approximately equivalent to the cuts made in March. Changes in authorized expenditures will involve two increases and one decrease.

The first and largest increase recommended is in the item for Committee Travel. The Financial Advisory Committee recommends that this item be increased from \$4,000 to \$5,325. Committee Travel expenses during the first third of the year amounted to more than \$2,800. The largest item was the cost of the March Board meeting which, with 100% attendance, totalled almost \$1,600. The next highest item was the cost of the annual meeting of the Nominating Committee which, as now constituted, involves an expense of \$500. The proposed budget item of \$5,325 will provide for one additional meeting of the Board, four additional meetings of the Executive Committee, and the necessary number of meetings for various national committees. The increase is necessary primarily because of the increased cost of National Board meetings and because of the urgent need for meetings of the Executive Committee of the Board in connection with the important duties recently assigned to it.

The second increase recommended by the Financial Advisory Committee is in the appropriation for office expenses. This should be raised from \$8,975 to \$9,600 in order to provide normal facilities during the remainder of the year. Office expenses during the first third of the year far exceeded the estimates.



The cause of this increase was almost exclusively the cost of handling material which it has been necessary for the national office to prepare and circulate in connection with Board, committee and chapter activities. For example, material relating to the March Board meeting, including that sent to Board members before the meeting, and the reports circulated to Board members and chapters after the meeting, cost \$542.25, not including postage and staff time. The Financial Advisory Committee, with the approval of the Executive Committee, has requested the Executive Secretary to inform officers, Board members and committee chairmen that it will be imperative to exercise selective control over such materials. Nevertheless, it is the belief of the Financial Advisory Committee that the minimum amount required for office expenses during the remainder of the year will raise the total of this item to the suggested figure of \$9,600.

The third change which the Financial Advisory Committee will recommend will be a reduction in the appropriation for publication of *THE COMPASS* from \$4,000 to \$3,500. This is made possible by the issuance of two combined bi-monthly numbers.

I would like to say for the record that the Financial Advisory Committee has considered the possibility of salary cuts. The Committee has ascertained that the professional staff is entirely willing to having the question of salary scales considered at any time. However, the committee flatly rejected the idea of having the staff meet an Association deficit because that plan is obviously at variance with the principles of agency stability and maintenance of standards long advocated by the Association for other organizations as well as our own. Meeting our deficit by reducing the salary item in the national budget would mean either exempting ourselves from the principles which we advocate for other employers or eliminating an entire unit of the national program.

The three revisions recommended by the committee, if approved by the Board, will increase the anticipated deficit for 1941 by \$775, making a total deficit of a little less than \$2,100 by the end of this year.

Since it is impossible for the Association to continue to accumulate deficits, there are four ways in which the financial problem can be met:

1. The Board can reduce expenditures by cutting the program or by leaving unfinished some projects already started.

2. We can make a more intensive effort to secure special contributions.
3. We can increase regular dues.
4. We can make temporary provision for additional income by Conference action to adopt a temporary assessment plan.

On behalf of the Financial Advisory Committee and the National Board, I wish to urge favorable action on the special assessment plan for these reasons:

Whatever adjustments remain to be made in our national program, there is no doubt that the Board's action in 1939 to extend the facilities for national action and national-chapter cooperation are producing vigorous and tangible results. For that reason, and for the additional reasons that stability of program and maintenance of agency standards are the only course consistent with principles of management formulated and advocated by the Association, this is not the time for retrenchment.

Last year's appeal for special contributions by Mr. Van Hynning's Committee and requests for contributing and sustaining membership payments sent out with dues statements in January and April have brought in a large number of contributions. The results are particularly encouraging in view of the fact that none of the several requests has been backed up by anything that could be called a campaign. It is possible that a concerted effort to secure still more extra contributions would yield enough to meet our present needs. It should be pointed out, however, that (while our by-laws specifically provide for contributing and sustaining memberships) comments, both from persons who have made contributions and those who have not, indicate that a large number of members do not approve of this method of financing the program of a professional association. At best, moreover, this plan involves serious elements of uncertainty.

The Financial Advisory Committee and the Board believe that no permanent increase in regular dues is needed. National income from sources other than special contributions increased by more than \$1,500 from 1939 to 1940. The Financial Advisory Committee estimates that it will again increase by \$1,500 in 1941. If this increase can be maintained in 1942, it will virtually offset our operating deficit by the end of 1942 and if continued will provide a small surplus in 1943.

Meanwhile, we are faced with the necessity of funds to meet our 1941 shortage and to



restore the working balance which was used up in 1940.

A special assessment of 50¢ per member for one year has been proposed as a means of raising approximately \$5,600. If this assessment is added to the bills which are mailed in four quarters beginning July 1, 1941, at least \$2,000 of the total amount should be paid before the end of the year. A decision to levy a special assessment probably would reduce the amount realized from special contributions. Despite this the Financial Advisory Committee believes that the additional income from the special assessment would enable us to wipe out our deficit by December 31. Additional amounts received during 1942 would assure not only a balanced budget but also a restoration of a working balance urgently needed to conduct the Association's program in a businesslike fashion.

Because it will enable us to share full financial responsibility for the Association's program throughout the entire membership; because it will enable us to keep our national program moving forward as it always has done; because it will enable us to fulfill a plan decided upon in 1939 and reaffirmed in last year's Delegate Conference; and because it will not commit us to increased obligations in the future:

I move, on behalf of the Financial Advisory Committee and the National Board, adoption and approval by the Delegate Conference of the plan outlined on page 19 of the April COMPASS for levying a special assessment of 50¢ on all members of the Association whose original bills for dues will be mailed during the four quarters beginning July 1, 1941.

### By-law Changes

Two changes in the by-laws of the Association were made at the Delegate Conference in Philadelphia. The first provided for election of one-third instead of the whole Nominating Committee each year, and the second provided for a change in the method of choosing delegate conference representatives of the non-chapter membership. The changes were made by passage of two proposed amendments printed in the April COMPASS.

The proposal to amend the by-laws by increasing membership dues by one dollar to defray expenses of chapter representatives to delegate conference was defeated without a record vote.

### Association Finances

The financial problems of the Association, as described in the report of James Brunot, Treasurer, were tossed back to the National Board by the Conference. The proposal made by the Board for a 50 cent assessment for one year was defeated at the end of the Conference by a vote of 72 to 61. A further motion was passed directing the National Board to balance the budget of the Association for this year.

The National Board, meeting June 1 in Atlantic City, after action which it was estimated will increase the expenses of the Executive Committee by about \$1,500 and will make the deficit total approximately \$3,500, passed the following motions:

That the Board authorize the Treasurer and Executive Secretary with the advice of the Financial Advisory Committee to balance the budget by the end of the year and to provide if possible for economies to be effected in items subject to control in the following order: office expense, COMPASS, publications, staff travel, committee travel, salaries.

That the Treasurer be authorized by this Board to attempt to augment income by calling attention of the members to the financial situation we face by the Delegate Conference action and invite any who care to, to take out contributing and sustaining memberships.

That this Board ask the Executive Secretary in the name of the Board to announce to all committee members who travel at the Association's expense that in the light of the financial situation the Board is requesting that they file expense accounts limited to travel and pullman if possible.

Work on budget changes will be taken up immediately by the Treasurer and Executive Secretary and two meetings of the Financial Advisory Committee have been arranged.

### Action on Section Six

As recommended by the National Board a resolution opposing continuation of Section 6, the exception clause of the membership requirements, was passed. The resolution proposed to take action when the other work on membership requirements, now underway, was ready for action. An amendment, requiring that such action be taken at the 1942 Conference, was passed.

## Conference Resolutions

According to the conference rules of order and procedure, resolutions submitted on the first day of the conference were referred to the appropriate existing committees which, at the final session, reported their recommendations for conference action. Following are the resolutions acted on by the conference. Several others, presented during the first day, were not acted on separately as their content was covered in the course of conference discussion.

**WHEREAS**, Established tradition does not include the concept of wages in relation to pay for military services to the nation, and

**WHEREAS**, The present rates of pay for the enlisted man involves him and his family in economic difficulties; therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, That this Delegate Conference urge upon the Congress of the United States an immediate and substantial increase in the rate of pay for the enlisted men in our armed forces.

Mr. Howard, for the Committee on Government and Social Work, moved its adoption and it was adopted unanimously.

**WHEREAS**, Low salaries in certain of the public social services have led to losses of valuable professional staff members to other occupations, and

**WHEREAS**, Low salaries are making recruitment of qualified social workers to these services difficult, and

**WHEREAS**, Low salaries are discouraging to the entrance of new students into this field; therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, That the 1941 Delegate Conference go on record as favoring an immediate and upward adjustment of salaries in public assistance, relief, child welfare and public recreation services and make its views known immediately to other appropriate bodies.

Mr. Howard, for the Committee on Government and Social Work, moved its adoption and it was adopted unanimously.

**WHEREAS**, The 1940 Delegate Conference adopted a resolution stating that the "AASW identifies itself with the public interest in its devotion to principles of individual freedom, happiness, and cooperation of free people one with another to the end of achieving a society in which men may live in peace and security . . ." furthermore that "it is imperative at this time to strengthen our inner lines of national defense by developing a permanent sense of security for all our people," and concluding that "Conference solemnly urge upon the people of this nation their abiding obligation . . . of building permanent protection against . . . social and economic ills . . . and that this represent a major concern of the Association," and

**WHEREAS**, With the increasingly critical world situation and with the accelerated movement toward involvement of our country in war and with the focus of public attention away from welfare needs except as directly related to defense activities, these principles are being increasingly threatened by the failure to extend necessary social services and by curtailment of civil rights of social workers and their clients alike; therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Association retain and emphasize as one of its major concerns in the program for the coming year, a vigorous strongly implemented set of principles and actions directed to strengthening our inner lines of defense by meeting the basic social, human and economic needs of the people of our nation.

Mr. Howard, for the Committee on Government and Social Work, moved its adoption and it was adopted unanimously.

The Executive Committee recommended the following proposal based on a statement presented by the Milwaukee chapter which, in preparing for the Delegate Conference, had noted a tendency to bring up for discussion and action issues previously and decisively acted upon by the delegate body:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, That the 1941 Delegate Conference recommend to the Board and to those planning the program of the Association that care be taken before reopening old decisions, to insure the necessity thereof.

Upon motion, the Executive Committee's recommendation was adopted.

The Executive Committee reported that a resolution received from the St. Louis chapter recommending a five year moratorium on the question of the location of the national office appeared to be covered substantially by adoption of the previous proposal. The decision of the Executive Committee was sustained.

The Executive Committee presented two other resolutions relating to Association program and planning, both of which it recommended be referred to the National Board. The first suggested that the conference select one or two program emphases which chapters would be urged to include in their programs for the year; the second recommending that the Delegate Conference continue to be held annually but that material for conference discussion be furnished chapters at least one year in advance since at present there is not sufficient time for chapter committee study and full chapter discussion and decision on conference proposals between the time of receipt of material and the conference. The Executive Committee's recommendation that these two resolutions be referred to the Board was approved by the conference.



## Special Committee on Delegate Conference

The Delegate Conference overruled the National Board decision about the progress report of the special committee appointed by the Board to study the powers and duties of the conference and the problem of equalizing for chapters the cost of representation at delegate conferences.

The committee, of which Mary Stanton of Los Angeles was chairman, and composed of other members of West Coast chapters, made a report to the Board in March. As the Board believed at that time that further work by the committee might eliminate some of the problems which were disclosed in its discussions, it indicated that proposed solutions of these problems be withheld until it had opportunity to consider the final version of its special committee's report, and therefore recommended to the committee that it present to the conference a progress report on reactions of chapters and on issues uncovered by its study.

Miss Stanton submitted the progress report written for the committee; this contained however several proposals for solution of problems it had described and omitted reports on chapter opinions. A request from the Executive Committee that the report be changed to conform to Board's instructions was refused by Miss Stanton, backed by other members of the committee. At its opening, the conference agreed to the motion by Marjorie Carpenter of California East Bay chapter to amend the agenda to provide for the discussion of the report. It was later discussed and copies made available to the delegates.

Executive Committee members explained that their action had to do with orderly process rather than any desire to withhold material for delegates.

The following motion was passed:

That the National Board be directed to continue its study of the problem of clarifying the responsibilities, powers, rights and duties of the Delegate Conference; that in pursuance of this objective, the Board be directed to continue the special committee, to utilize such other sources of information and means, etc., as may be available to it and on the basis of the total resources

which are available to it throughout the year, including this committee, to attempt next year to bring in to the Delegate Conference such clarifying by-laws as it believes to be appropriate.

## The "Goodwill Hour"

The New York City chapter of the AASW has a Letter-Writing Committee whose present assignment is to write and stimulate other members to write personal letters to the press and the radio on matters which to them seem to need some interpretation.

The committee's attention, at present, is focused on a National Broadcasting Company program known as the Goodwill Hour. This program is sponsored by Ironized Yeast and conducted by Mr. John J. Anthony. Any person is invited to come in and is given a few minutes to tell his personal difficulties to Mr. Anthony and the radio audience. Then with only a very superficial knowledge of the person and the problems Mr. Anthony gives advice as to the solution of the problems. Many of the situations presented indicate a need for either psychiatric or long-time casework treatment.

In December, 1940, *Time Magazine* carried an article to which the committee felt it could react with approbation. Since that time they have urged individuals and organizations to write to the National Broadcasting Company and the sponsor of the program. Since the Goodwill Hour is on a national network the committee wishes to call it to the attention of the Association with the hope that other chapters and individuals will follow their lead in this matter.

AN interesting device in a state-wide chapter with a scattered membership is through series of letters Mrs. Rosebud Savage, chairman of the *Oklahoma Chapter*, has been sending to all chapter members. The letter is an experiment, to try to keep all members informed about actions of the executive committee, various events in the chapter and the Association, and special developments about social work in the state, as well as to identify problems and questions which require chapter attention.

## Values of the St. Louis Inquiry and Report for Future Study

Report to the Delegate Conference by  
**Dorothy Hankins**, Chairman, National Committee on Personnel Practices

You have a written report from our national Committee on Personnel Practices but I am glad that the National Board has requested me, as chairman of that committee, to report to you on the values of the St. Louis Inquiry and Report for this Association. During the past year the Inquiry and Report have provoked an extraordinary amount of discussion and debate. It is the hope of the Committee on Personnel Practices that it will be able to put the Report and the discussion and debate about it to the fullest possible use.

The principles and standards on which the St. Louis Inquiry and Report proceeded were adopted in 1936. Since that time about 15,000 copies of the Association's Statement about Standard Employment Practices have been distributed and the statement has also served as a model for chapter statements that have in turn been widely circulated. In spite of all this, it has been a problem of the Association to get attention for its principles and standards from its own members. Without such attention Association statements are just so much ink and paper wasted. Principles and standards serve no purpose unless our members think of them as ideas to be put into practice, as ideas that sooner or later will affect them as individuals in practice. Short of seeing principles and standards in this light, we are letting them remain simply words. That is why the St. Louis Inquiry and Report are important. They tested the principles the AASW set up, but even more important, they tested the understanding and conviction about them of many of our members. After our committee's review of the issues raised by members about the Association's activity in this instance, I am convinced that in the long run the most valuable contribution of the Report will prove to be its revelation of disagreements and confusions among us which might otherwise have continued hidden.

First of all, I want to emphasize that profitable use can be made of the concept found in the St. Louis Report, that the personnel standards and practices in an agency serve the interests of the agency as a *whole*. Discussions of the Report show that work is needed to correct the tendency on the part both of agency administrators and staff workers to go on the assumption that personnel practices are more the concern of staff than of the administration and to believe that initia-

tive for their establishment and improvement rests with the staff alone. The broadened concept of a total agency responsibility for personnel practices provides a basis for defining more clearly the differing rôles of board, executive and staff in the development of effective personnel relationships and desirable working conditions.

This concept, that the whole agency has an interest in good personnel practices, also provides the foundation for further clarification of the principles of staff participation—a clarification for which we have a need as shown by the Report and reactions to it. Unfortunately there is a habit among social workers generally of thinking of staff participation in exclusive terms of employee interests instead of relating it to purposes as urgent for board and executive as for staff. The need for clarification of participation is mentioned only briefly here because groups in some of the chapters are already working upon this problem.

I call your attention more fully to the following points:

1. The St. Louis Report highlights unsolved problems in the definition of the executive's responsibilities and of the qualifications required for their competent discharge.

What must the executive know to meet his professional responsibilities to the staff on the one hand and to board on the other?

What should be the responsibilities and powers of the executive, and what authority in his rôle must be accepted by him, his board and his staff?

What factors are responsible for the isolation of the executive from the board on the one hand and the staff on the other, and how may they be brought under his control?

What can be done to make possible the removal of the present obstacle to evaluations of the executive and elimination of the risks *to him*, his board, and his agency that inhere in the absence of any basis for professional evaluation of his performance?

Actually very little study has been made of administration as a process, and the Com-



mittee on Personnel Practices rejoices to see that the profession is beginning to pay much needed attention to this important process as evidenced by some public welfare studies, the study which the Association of Schools has been making of curriculum needs, and by such special projects as the Ten Days on Administration planned for this summer by the Pennsylvania School of Social Work and open to executives, chief supervisors and teachers of social work.

2. The Report and discussions of it reveal the necessity for social workers to explore further the implications of such questions as:

Does the private agency have a responsibility to the public which requires that its operations be conducted with respect for professional principles and standards?

Should a board hold itself responsible for being able to furnish evidence that the services the agency is rendering are necessary and are properly performed according to the principles set by the profession?

3. Reactions to the Report are evidence that its definition of the administrative function, administrative relationships and administrative method should be studied further in their bearing on such questions as:

What is the difference between the responsibilities which social workers have in agency relationships to one another, and the responsibilities they have in their relationships to clients?

What is the difference between administrative method, its purposes and content, and casework and other specialized methods used in service to clients?

4. One underlying thesis of the Report is that professional social workers shall hold themselves and one another accountable for discharging their responsibilities. Since discussion has brought out differences of opinion in regard to this thesis, there is need for consideration of the following questions:

What are the implications of the professional obligation which social workers have for the welfare of clients and the public?

What obligations do social workers have to one another because they are pledged to support standards?

What are the issues involved in concealment from the public of violations by

agencies or individuals of professional standards?

These questions do not exhaust the possibilities of principles to be examined in this professional area but they have all been raised by members of our Association in some form during the past months, and all obviously need more thoughtful answers than we as individual members have been prepared to give in the past.

Separate from the above questions, is the matter of inquiries themselves. Reactions to the St. Louis Inquiry indicate the need for emphasizing that personnel practices inquiries seek to clarify questions as to whether given professional responsibilities have been discharged in the conduct of personnel relationships; that inquiries into personnel practices do *not* embrace the whole performance of the persons involved or the whole work of the agency and that therefore the judgments reached do not embrace total job or agency performance; that publication of the findings of an inquiry may be necessary to prevent confusion between its conclusions and actions running counter to those conclusions which may be taken in the meantime by any of the parties involved.

In its review of questions raised about the method of the inquiry, our committee noted that much of the comment on "method" was not on method but on matters of procedure being covered in the "Chapter and National Procedures for Employment Practices Inquiries" proposed for action by this conference. The development of orderly procedures is of great importance but of equal importance is the soundness of method in the Inquiry since this must be the chief safeguard against bias and other forms of error and inefficiency. The St. Louis Report provides a basis for the analysis of method we have sorely needed and will be used by the Personnel Practices Committee in work to define the special principles and skill required in the actual performance of professional inquiries.

Another indirect outcome of the St. Louis Inquiry has been the realization that we need definite formulations of criteria of professional conduct. In this connection the Personnel Practices Committee has been asked to work out, in coöperation with the National Membership Committee, definitions that will be applicable both to procedures for admission and procedures for exclusion of members for action at the 1942 Delegate Conference. Though the committee has only started on this task, it has produced some statements based on the two sections of the Statement about Standard Employment Practices which the National Board is suggesting this con-

ference adopt for interim use. I am calling to your attention the presence in your folders of these "Tentative Criteria of Professional Conduct" since you may wish to consider them as possible substitutes for the paragraphs from the Statement.

### Participation of National Office Staff in Conference Sessions as Representatives of AASW

Dorothy C. Kahn participated in a panel discussion under the auspices of the Joint Committee of Trade Unions in Social Work on the subject, "Safeguarding Personnel and Services in Social Agencies," and in a group discussion under Section II—Social Group Work—on "Civil Liberties of Workers in Social Agencies."

Frank Bruno representing Wayne McMillen, Lucia Clow, chairman of the National Membership Committee, Dorothy Hankins, chairman of the national Committee on Personnel Practices, and members of the national staff, participated in a joint meeting called by the American Association of Schools of Social Work, with representatives of other professional associations. The subjects under discussion included problems of accrediting in relation to membership standards and civil service, and the relation of local chapters to local schools. Present collaboration between these associations in the National Roster and in the Sub-Committee on Personnel of the Advisory Committee to the Coordinator's Office on Family Security was noted.

The AASW acted as host to the representatives of the South American schools of social work on Friday afternoon, June 6, at which time the school representatives were particularly interested in Association membership requirements and the development of ethical standards. There are no equivalents of the Association in any of the South American countries although there is a possibility that some of the alumni associations of the schools may develop in this direction.

Miss Marcus was discussant at a session of the American Association of Schools of Social Work on June 3 at which present trends in professional education were reported from the point of view of the American Association of Medical Social Workers by Kate McMahon, of the American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers by Anna Belle Tracy and of the American Association for the Study of

Group Work by Dorothea Sullivan. Commenting on the AASW's current study of membership requirements Miss Marcus indicated the need for re-examining both the basic and the "specialized" aspects of professional education and clarifying their relationship one to another.

Miss Kahn of the national staff participated in the meeting of the International Conference Committee in a joint meeting held by Hospites and the Committee on Displaced Foreign Social Workers, and acted as hostess at the Hospites tea for foreign social workers in attendance at the Conference.

Miss Kahn presented a paper in the Case Work Section entitled "Conserving Human Values in Public Welfare Programs: Where the Service Meets the Client."

### Material for the 1941 Delegate Conference

This list indicates reports and other documents prepared for the 1941 Delegate Conference and distributed to delegates and alternates either in advance of or during the Conference. Much of this material will be available in this and the August issues of THE COMPASS:

- Subjects of Actions Taken by the National Board
- Comments on the St. Louis Report
- Report for the Committee on Personnel Practices
- Tentative Criteria on Professional Conduct
- Outline for Report of Committee on Government and Social Work
- Report for the Committee on Chapters
- Report for the National Membership Committee
- Growth of Membership of AASW 1923-1940
- Experience of the AASW in Administering Section 6
- Purposes of Individual Membership
- Comments on the Association Year—Report of the Executive Secretary
- Progress Report of the Executive Committee to the Delegate Conference
- Progress Report of the Special Committee on the Delegate Conference
- Summary of Chapter Returns on Trends in Public Social Services

In addition, copies of the following were distributed as background material:

- Association By-laws
- Operating Policies of National Board
- The Association's Program, 1940-41



## Comments on the St. Louis Report

*At its March meeting the National Board requested Aileen Kennedy Maccracken, who is a member of the board, to review the large amount of correspondence received from AASW members and groups of members expressing their views on the St. Louis Inquiry and Report and to prepare a report on these for publication in THE COMPASS. Mrs. Maccracken's report is printed below.*

The president and the national office have received a very great many thoughtful and thought-provoking letters relating to the St. Louis inquiry. At the suggestion of the National Board all the letters have been read and abstracted, and all suggestions, criticisms and requests have been noted and will be given careful consideration. This report is intended to give a brief summary of the letters received, without disclosing the identities of the writers.

Many of the letters were written by individuals who were prompted to write simply by a favorable or unfavorable reaction to the report. Some letters were form letters written originally by two groups—one in opposition to and the other in support of the Inquiry and Report, and circulated for signatures. Some comments on the study were included in the replies received to the appeal for an additional contribution. Some contributed because of the undertaking of the St. Louis Inquiry while some refused to contribute because of it. A few chapters sent communications relating to their chapter action and opinion. A group of faculty members of one school of social work expressed their sentiments.

Never has the AASW dealt with a subject that has elicited so much comment and expression from the membership. The letters show quite clearly the many varying and conflicting views of the members, but no attempt has been made to keep a numerical record of those who favored or those who opposed the St. Louis study and such a function. In order, however, that the full intent and meaning of the members' comments may be presented in the light of their agreement or disagreement, this report will be under three heads: (1) Commendations, (2) Criticisms, (3) Suggestions.

### (1) COMMENDATIONS

Those letters which endorsed or favored the St. Louis Inquiry commended its objectivity;

its gathering, correlation and presentation of facts; and its emphasis upon accepted professional standards and practices. Many expressed the belief that the Inquiry was a step forward in establishing sound professional practices. Others stated that such an examination, when occasioned by threats to professional ethics and accepted personnel practices, was a legitimate function and obligation of a professional agency. Precedent for such an inquiry was said to have been established by the AASW as early as 1924. It was suggested that one of the major jobs of the Association is to secure understanding and acceptance of personnel policies by agency boards, councils and community fund organizations. Such letters said that the responsibility of the Association goes beyond the mere formulation of standards and includes knowing how these standards are used. Therefore such an activity as the St. Louis Inquiry implements the practices for which we stand.

Typical of the general commendations are the following:

" . . . we endorse the actions taken by them (the Board) in accepting the report on the inquiry into the situation in the Family Service Society of St. Louis County, and approve the decision to make the report available to Association members. It is our strong conviction that the AASW has carried out one of its primary purposes in undertaking this study and sharing its findings with the membership. It is the responsibility of the AASW to promote and defend sound professional practice. Adequate employment practices are an indispensable condition if effective service is to be rendered to our clients."

" . . . I got a new sense of what we mean when we say social work is a profession, and a much more vivid appreciation of what 'participation' means than I ever had before. Altogether I would say that this is compul-

sory reading for anyone who is interested in social agency personnel policies. . . ."

" . . . Mr. West did a very commendable piece of work in his gathering, correlation and presentation of facts, such as to make it a document having value in relation to the progress of social work today."

"To have done otherwise (than to make the report available) in this situation, where rumor and gossip were outrunning fact, would have been detrimental to our professional advancement."

"The leadership given by you to such a study is of such inestimable value to the professional field. Only through such leadership from the national AASW can the professional content of adequate service of agencies be assured. It is by such clear thinking, conviction and sincerity that we can acquire the professional respect of the community we serve, and a report of this type will do much in stimulating high professional practice and integrity."

"The report is presented in a very objective manner, and one recognizes in the entire record that emphasis is placed on principles, standards and practices, etc. It seems to me that this can be considered an epoch-making study in that we, as a profession, have finally come to the point of facing clearly some of the problems confronting us in reference to sound professional standards. It behooves us as professional people to examine our practice carefully and objectively and also to be willing to look at our own mistakes in the same fashion if we expect to be accepted as a professional body by the lay group."

"The means used in making and presenting the inquiry, viz. of defining its areas of study and confining the inquiry to these so that it is based on the method of procedure and not on an evaluation of work or of motivations, is most important. For in limiting itself to the areas for which the American Association of Social Workers has a responsibility and a right to study, the inquiry becomes a professional document."

The relation between the St. Louis Inquiry and our responsibility to the community was emphasized in such letters as these:

"As a community member, I wish to congratulate you on this particular piece of work.

If more surveys of this kind could be made by a responsible organization such as the AASW, community life and community standards would be raised in many different ways."

"If we as professional social workers are not willing to view our methods and practices objectively—as done in the St. Louis study—others less equipped are going to do it for us with a less positive result. In my own agency the executive committee of the board is studying the report at my suggestion and feel as business men that the professional calibre of the report is to be commended. The core of professional integrity, as they know it in their own professions, is in such a study. Through taking leadership in this area I am convinced we will gain the respect of the community."

"Private agencies, if they are to continue receiving public endorsement and financial support, must measure up to certain standards, and it is the responsibility of all social workers to see that all agencies meet these standards."

"The private agency, which depends upon community money, is not exposed to the same scrutiny as the public agency which is constantly exposed to criticism and investigation. This places a heavy burden on the profession employed in the private field, upon whom conscientious boards rely for responsible authority on matters of agency performance. To some, the application of objectives and inquiry into the private field may appear to be trespassing on sacred ground. It leads into an evaluation of administrative competence, it forces upon us a responsibility which as yet we have been unwilling to accept, but which we cannot deny."

Others noticed more particularly the effect of the Inquiry upon agency administration and employment practices, saying:

"It is my conviction that during this past year the Association has taken a forward step by making and releasing the St. Louis Inquiry on Employment Practices, thus helping the membership to see in a concrete way the importance of good employment practices in administration and the inevitable connection between quality of service and conditions of work. We have, of course, for a long time seen, intellectually at least, this connection; but for some of us, this relating back to actual practice those standards of employment practices which in the first place come out of



practice, has marked a real step in our professional development."

"So little has been written on agency administration that agencies do not have access to material to help them in arriving at policies and procedures. The St. Louis inquiry provides formalized material which agencies can study and use as a means of helping them define where board and staff responsibilities lie and when participation is right and necessary. The Employment Practices as set down by the AASW have been valuable guides to agencies, but the inquiry has increased their value, for by putting the practices into action they have been translated from theory into practice and their usefulness is proved."

"On the question of evaluation of professional workers in itself, . . . there is a whole new content and process to be absorbed and further developed. . . . Your study does point up the problem of evaluation related to the executive's position as well as the executive's problem in evaluating others."

"Especially does your report emphasize the need for particular examination of the professional aspects in administration."

"By this time I am sure you are convinced that the report contains material which is of great importance to the development of the professional relationship to employment practices. We recognize that fully and are planning to use the report as a basis for attempting to institute some policy making in this regard in all the agencies in the Jewish Federation."

"Since case workers are required to equip themselves to meet agency standards in terms of training and to continue professional growth through experience and supervision, is there not a corresponding obligation upon the agency to maintain a set of practices that encourage the employment and development so essential to its own program?"

"Your report, thorough, forthright, skillfully done, has revived faith in many of us, who, watching the developments in the Family Service Society, were fearful that the forces of reaction evident in the attitudes and behavior of executive and board there might be fore-runners of a trend to smash all decent personnel standards in social work. We are hoping that the report will be widely studied for its thought provoking and well grounded

conclusions concerning administrative staff relationships."

The support given by the Inquiry to the professional standards of the Association was the point which impressed many.

"A standard as a basis for objective evaluation is essential to any profession. If it cannot be applied, then it becomes sterile and useless. In making the study we acted in accordance with our expressed conviction."

"I have had a keen interest in the way the AASW is beginning to stand back of its formulated standards and to recognize in a practical way the relation between such standards and the professional performance and status of an agency. . . . I have always seen the need for some kind of action to make a reality of better employment practices and consequent better performance. Standards are not enough when they have no meaning in reality."

"I do not see how we shall ever establish such a standard (adequate professional social work service to clients) unless the professional organization of social workers deals with concrete issues in which the standard has been violated. The same kind of situation in the academic world has been investigated any number of times by the AAUP and the results published."

Several observed the difference in the role of a union and of a professional organization like the AASW.

". . . I believe that where questions of professional standards and ethics are concerned the Association should take an active part in just the sort of clarification you gave. The function of unions in social work is very important, I believe, but somewhat different and supplementary to that of a professional organization."

"The very fact that such organizations (as unions) are developing in social work, however, makes it all the more essential that organizations like the AASW which includes both executives and practitioners in social work shall continue to function for the support of standards of professional service. If at a point like this the common interest of executives proves stronger than the common concern for adequate standards which holds social workers of every grade together, then

the AASW will lose its position as the real guardian of the professional interests of all social workers."

Another pointed out that the membership of AASW is made up of both employers and employees and hoped that the Association would never align itself with one group to the exclusion of another. "... facts of a flagrant violation of our principles should be made known regardless of which group is affected."

## (2) CRITICISMS

Those letters which commented unfavorably upon the St. Louis study criticized it as not having been properly authorized or as representing the opinion of one person, and some objected to the publication of the report because of what they believed to be its confidential nature. One member summarized his criticism thus:

"I consider the Clayton incident a series of colossal errors on the part of the Association . . . of the former president for authorizing it without consultation; of the secretary for producing what seems to me a prejudiced and unrealistic document; and of the National Board for accepting and giving wide publicity to the report."

One member, who wished to be on record as protesting the undertaking of the Inquiry and the National Board's action on October 18, 1940, said:

"I find nothing which I can even remotely interpret as provision for this kind of inquiry."

Charging a lack of authorization for the study, the letter circulated by a group opposed to the Inquiry stated that such an undertaking as the St. Louis study should first be submitted to the chapter and Delegate Conference for discussion and approval.

This same group criticized the study and report because the "conclusions in the Clayton investigation are predicated upon acceptance of those principles (Employment Practices) as if they were requirements of a practice already agreed upon and adopted by all social agencies. Moreover, we question whether the Delegate Conference, in approving the Employment Practices Report, conceived it as binding upon members in all its aspects, particularly since members are not self-employed."

Another passage from the letter of this

group runs: "We believe that this case brings into high relief

1. the lack of opportunity for membership participation in determining what activities should constitute the field program;
2. absence of adequate machinery for handling complaints;
3. the lack of clarity in our constitution as to how membership is to be gained and lost."

Several letters suggested that more than one person should have made the report, and that those persons should have been familiar with the problems of an operating social case work agency, one with the point of view of the executive, and another with the point of view of the staff. One member, who did not feel it was an "impartial report, entered into with an open mind," criticized it as a "one man study" and questioned the appropriateness of the executive secretary making such a study. Another thought that the report should have included more fully the problems of the executive and the past difficulties in the agency, while one executive, who felt that "none is beyond or above the making of mistakes," said that it seemed a "breach of professional ethics for an agency or a worker or an executive to be 'blackballed' nationally by a professional organization in which he has membership."

The publication of the report was opposed by some on the ground that the material in it was of a confidential nature and was comparable to a case record. Typical of these letters are the following:

"I have also a deep conviction that we do not help to improve personnel procedure or practices when we make public a report that raises the kind of questions and creates the kind of situation that now exists in the FSS of St. Louis County, as a result of the study report."

"Wide dissemination of the full report, authorized by the National Board, is at variance with accepted social work principles regarding confidential nature of information secured in social surveys."

"... all social workers of any standing believe in the confidential nature of the factual data recorded in case records. The AASW, however, appears to have been willing to sell reports about the mistakes of one of its own members."



"I think the method used in the investigation and the wide-spread publicity given to the report have been unprofessional and calculated to bring disrepute upon the profession of social work, rather than to further its scientific advancement."

Others, critical of the report, raised questions such as these: What are the purposes of the Association and are they adequately stated? Does the present constitution meet our needs today? Is the present program developing in a manner that satisfies to a considerable degree the minority as well as the majority? Is there a lack of opportunity for membership participation in determining what activities should constitute the field program of the AASW?

### (3) SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions in regard to future procedure were made both by those who approved and those who disapproved the St. Louis study.

One who felt that AASW had no proper procedure for dealing with personnel practice problems recommended the consideration of AAUP procedure and those of other professional organizations to devise a procedure adopted to the needs of AASW. In contrast to the AAUP plan he felt the AASW procedure used on this occasion stands "condemned as undignified, incompetent to reach any satisfactory solution, and bound to promote ill-feeling."

Another commented:

"... the precedent that other professional organizations have established of having at least two people, and usually three make the inquiry or investigation of a controversial situation is sound."

From some of those who viewed the report favorably came the suggestion for the establishment of adequate machinery to handle such studies in the future, and some specifically advocated the procedure of the AAUP. One recommended a committee on review. One went beyond this and suggested that within possible cooperative limits national functional and professional agencies might be able to work together on any particular situation involving a local agency, and therefore any procedure adopted for the future should allow for such collaboration.

Another who viewed the report favorably said that AASW should be a resource for the protection of standards when other sources

do not function or are not available, but that first of all we should seek help from the local council of social agencies, the local chapter, the national organization to which the agency belongs, and the national office of AASW. He pointed out that there was tremendous advantage to be gained in that the use of local councils would help spread an awareness of good employment practices.

A letter from groups supporting the Inquiry and Report expressed special concern that the Association guard against establishing a procedure that was "complicated and forbidding," and that any procedure proposed should be in the interest of effective performance by the Association.

Another suggestion which came from a chapter that supported the action of the National Board was that the national AASW consider a restatement of the functions and procedures in relation to the employment practices of the AASW in clearer and greater detail than is now contained in the by-laws.

One of the by-products of the St. Louis study was the creation of sentiment to clarify the basis and procedure for recalling a membership and also to establish "criteria for competence in practice in addition to the present criteria based on professional education." Or to put it more simply, as one member said, there is a lack of clarity as to how membership is to be gained and lost. The question of expulsion from membership was related to issues arising subsequently to the violation of the accepted personnel standards and employment practices of the AASW with which the Inquiry dealt. Nonetheless the two quite different problems were confused and frequently members commented on both. Typical of the comments on the membership problem is the comment of one group:

"According to our present By-laws, we find that membership is gained through the individual's conformity to ethical standards of the Association, but these ethical standards have never been formulated and are therefore not available for examination by prospective members or admitting committees. When it comes to revocation of membership, the wording is changed. The By-laws provide that members are to be dropped for not being in harmony with the purposes of the Association. However, Article II, Section I of the By-laws, although it purports to state the purposes of the Association, does not do so, but merely describes the fields of interest of the members."



## Chapter and National Procedures for Employment Practices Inquiries

*The following report and outline of procedures for employment practices inquiries was adopted by the 1941 Delegate Conference at Philadelphia. Comparison of this report with the original report approved by the National Board and printed in THE COMPASS for April 1941 will show the amendments voted by the Conference.*

### REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE

The American Association of Social Workers believes that qualified personnel and sound employment practices are factors of prime importance in making it possible for an agency to provide uninterrupted service of professional quality to its clientele and its community.

The Association adopted a Statement about Standard Employment Practices in 1937 because of its belief that the professional quality of social work should be protected by good employment practices. This statement covers purpose and scope, the suggested principles on which sound working relationships can be developed and some examples of better existing practices. The Delegate Conference of 1940 adopted Agency Standards for Employment Conditions which recommend that social agencies have written statements of formulated employment practices covering all of the elements of employment conditions included in the Statement about Standard Employment Practices. The Delegate Conference of 1940 also adopted a Statement on Standards for Social Work Personnel.

Social agencies can be effective only if the board, executive and staff work together. The board, executive and staff should participate in the discussion of such questions as change of program, changed duties of staff, and tenure of staff.

Serious differences involving matters of professional relationship between a staff member and the employing agency may prevent the agency from effective functioning unless the difficulty is resolved through existing agency channels or through some other channel. The American Association of Social Workers wishes to encourage the use of agency or community channels. In some agencies or communities, however, there is no machinery available or it has failed to function.

For these reasons the American Association

of Social Workers believes that it should provide sufficiently practical machinery for the mediation and study of difficulties which may arise involving the profession of social work, so that prompt and thorough consideration may be given to each request. The objective would include not only the resolution of the difficulty but the interpretation of the basis for desirable practice in the particular area involved, going beyond the individual instance into the desirability of good employment practices by the agency.

The American Association of Social Workers believes that it has an obligation both as an organization and through its individual members to continue to interpret the Statement about Standard Employment Practices, Agency Standards for Employment Conditions, and Standards for Social Work Personnel to national and local agencies and to encourage individual agencies to study these standards with a view to formulating and adopting agency employment practices and personnel standards.

The Association believes that it has a further obligation to interpret to its members and to national and local agencies its objectives in setting up the following plan for handling grievances involving matters of employment practices.

### OUTLINE OF PLAN

#### *National Committee on Employment Practices*

The National Board shall name a national Committee on Employment Practices, to consist of a chairman, three members, and the president of the Association, and the executive secretary to act as adviser.

**National Committee Function**—The national committee shall handle original requests from members in non-chapter territory, referrals from chapter committees and appeals from the action of chapter committees.

#### *Chapter Committees*

Each chapter shall name a Committee on Employment Practices or designate the Executive Committee or some other committee to carry on the work of a Committee on Employment Practices. The Executive Committee of the chapter shall notify members of the chapter of this committee, its membership and functions.



**Appeal to Chapter Committees**—Any member or non-member employed as a social worker may bring to the chapter committee his or her grievance stating in writing at the time the nature of the grievance, what use has been made of existing channels in the agency for the settlement of the grievance, and what other action has been initiated on his behalf.

**Procedure for Chapter Committees in Considering Appeals**—The chapter committee shall collect data to clarify the issues and shall determine whether or not the request comes within the scope of the committee function, using the following criteria:

a. A definite request has been made in writing by the individual social worker involved.

b. The grievance involves employment practices.

c. The appellant has initiated the use of the appeal machinery existing within the agency. The committee may assist the appellant in the use of such appeal machinery or of facilities for adjustment within the agency.

d. The appellant has informed the committee about other action initiated on his behalf.

e. The committee shall consider the relationship of the agency involved to its national agency.

f. The committee may consider the review of the grievance even though the existing appeal machinery has been used and the issue is technically closed.

g. When the request is accepted the chapter committee shall decide, on the basis of the data secured:

1. Whether it is possible to proceed locally to try to effect a settlement.

2. Whether the committee should undertake the study and review of the case.

3. Recognizing that there are times, particularly in small chapters, when members of local groups are too close to the situations to view them with objectivity, the committee may refer the request to the national committee, with a report on the data collected and the reasons for the decision to refer it to the national.

h. If the chapter committee does not accept responsibility, it shall make a formal reply to the appellant, stating the reasons for the decision and notifying the appellant that he may appeal to the national Committee on Employment Practices.

#### Procedure for Chapter Committees After Acceptance for Study and Review

1. The committee selects a special small committee to make the inquiry which shall consist of members of the American Association of Social Workers.

2. The committee shall give due notification to the agency involved that the request has been accepted for consideration and action.

3. The national Committee on Employment Practices is notified that the chapter has accepted the request for consideration and action.

4. The national office will thereupon notify the national agency, if the local agency is a member, that the request has been accepted for consideration and action. This does not preclude the chapter from having direct communication with representatives of the national.

5. Before proceeding on an inquiry a statement shall be made to the parties involved concerning the use of the report by them and by the American Association of Social Workers. A copy will be given to each party involved, to the chapter committee and the national committee. The report shall be limited to the confidential use of the committees and the parties involved as long as negotiations are going on. Materials shall not be released for publication until the investigation is concluded and the final decision has been made. Materials shall then be released only at the discretion of the Executive Committee of the chapter, and notification to the national Association of such decision to release material. If in the opinion of the chapter Executive Committee there is a final decision against the interest of any one of the parties not borne out by the report, the chapter Committee on Employment Practices should have the power to make a statement or to remove the confidential restrictions. The person requesting the inquiry shall agree in writing to the above use of the reports.

Publication by the Association is made only after the national Committee on Employment Practices and the National Board approve.

6. The chapter Committee on Employment Practices shall send the national Committee a copy of the report on each request as soon as it is completed. At the end of each year the chapter committee shall make a statistical report to the chapter, a copy of which shall be sent to the national committee. No requests or inquiries shall be identified in



the report except in cases where publication has been authorized.

### ***Procedure for the National Committee***

1. The National Committee through the executive secretary and the national office conducts correspondence to determine whether or not the issues involved come within the scope of the committee function, using the following criteria:

a. A definite request has been made in writing by the individual social worker involved.

b. The grievance involves employment practices.

c. The appellant has initiated the use of the appeal machinery existing within the agency. The committee may assist the appellant in the use of such appeal machinery or of facilities for adjustment within the agency.

d. The appellant has informed the committee about other action initiated on his behalf.

e. The committee shall consider the relationship of the agency involved to its national agency.

f. The committee may consider the review of the grievance even though the existing appeal machinery has been used and the issue is technically closed.

g. The committee should consider, if the grievance comes to it as an appeal over the decision of a chapter, the grounds for the chapter's action.

h. If the committee does not accept responsibility, it shall make a formal reply to the appellant, stating the reason for the decision and notifying the appellant that he may appeal to the National Board.

2. When the request is accepted by the national committee a preliminary statement of issues is prepared and the committee determines upon the action to be taken.

3. If an inquiry is agreed upon, the na-

tional committee selects a special committee to make the inquiry, the committee to consist of two or more members of the American Association of Social Workers and that the services of the national staff be utilized by the committee as required.

4. The committee shall give due notice to the agency involved that the request has been accepted for consideration and action.

5. If the agency involved is a member of a national agency, the national agency is notified that the American Association of Social Workers has accepted the request for consideration and action.

6. Before proceeding on an inquiry a statement shall be made to the parties involved concerning the use of the report by them and by the American Association of Social Workers. A copy will be given to each party involved. The report shall be limited to the confidential use of the committee and the parties involved as long as negotiations are going on. Materials shall not be released for publication until the investigation is concluded and the final decision has been made. Materials shall then be released only at the discretion of the National Board except that if in the opinion of the national committee there is a final decision against the interest of any one of the parties not borne out by the report, the national committee shall have the power to make a statement or to remove the confidential restriction. The persons requesting the inquiry shall agree in writing to the above use of the reports.

7. Publication by the Association shall be made only on the recommendation of the national committee and approval by the National Board.

8. The national committee shall publish an annual report in *THE COMPASS*, including a statistical report on the work of the national committee and the chapter committees. No requests or inquiries shall be identified in the report except in cases where publication has been authorized.